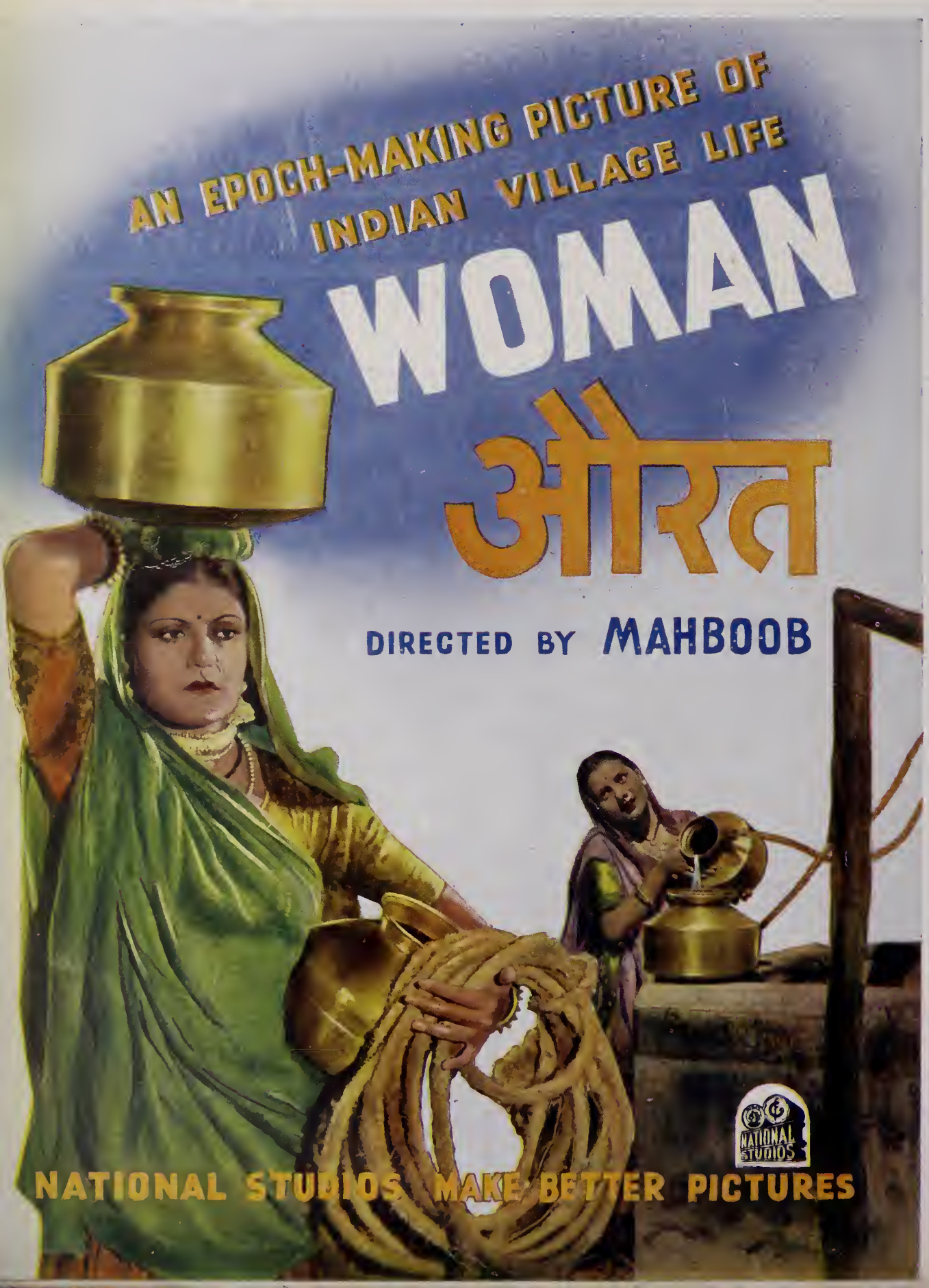
filmindia

As Pathetic as the Labour of Motherhoo

As Thrilling as the Cry of a New Born Bab



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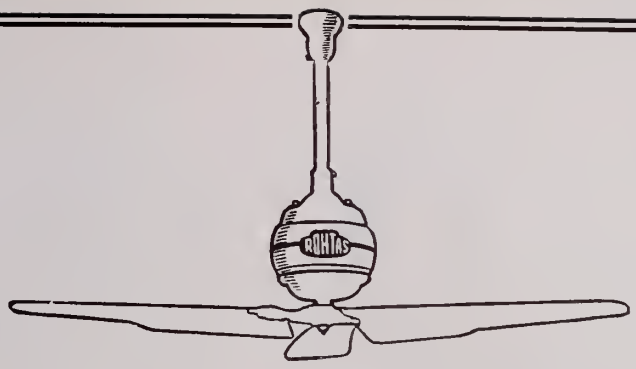

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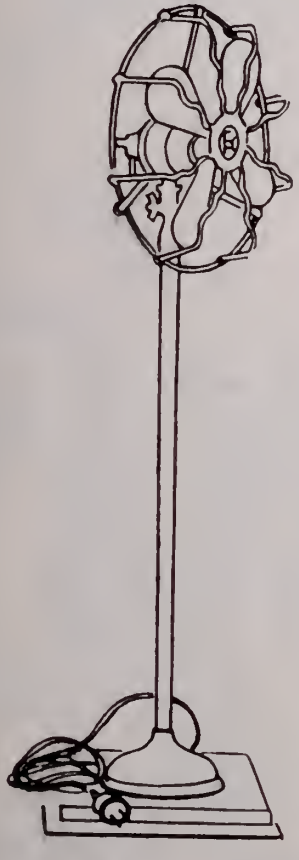

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Padma Devi our famous film star, will once again be seen in "Hindusthan Hamara" produced in Calcutta by Daryani Brothers.

filmindia

Proprietors: Filmindia Publications Ltd., 104, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay

Editor: **BABURAO PATEL**

Vol. 6 JUNE 1940 No. 6

Written In Tears!

A death, worth a thousand births, has taken place. Himansu Rai—artist, director, producer and friend died suddenly and by his death created a void which can never be filled.

Very few people knew him when he lived. He had to die to be known and mourned by all in our film world. They realised his greatness, when they missed him. Till then, he was called a shy and retiring aristocrat, an artist in hermitage and a genius in the chains of his own ideals shouting to the world: "Leave me alone to work out my ideal." That ideal was the Bombay Talkies Ltd.

But the day he died the world discovered that it had lost a great soul which had strived for expression every minute of its career through life.

To praise him is to paint the lily. In him Devika Rani lost her husband and pal and I lost my brother and friend.

Let us weep and with our tears keep his memory green in our hearts. Tears are made of human blood and what greater offering can those left behind give to the one who has gone ahead!

BABURAO PATEL.

Annual subscription inland Rs. 5/- Foreign Rs. 8/- or Sh. 12. 3 dollars in U.S.A.

As Gautam in "Light of Asia" Himansu Rai became the most popular hero (1925).

Hero of "Throw of Dice" (1928).

As Lord Buddha in "Light of Asia" (1925).

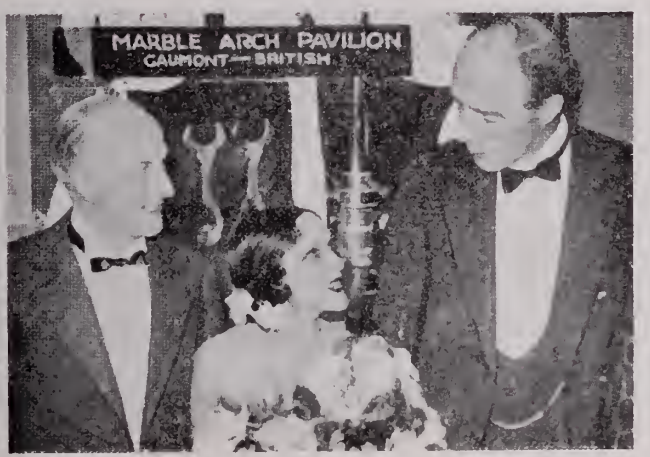
Shooting "Throw of Dice," Sitting: 3rd from left: Franz Osten, 4th Seeta Devi, 5th Himansu Rai, 6th Modhu Bose (1928).

Farewell to a throne and his charger, Gautam leaves the world behind (1925).

Hero of "Shiraz" (1928).

At the shooting of "Karma" in the Stolls Studios., London. In the balcony are seen Mr. & Mrs. Rai (1932).

The Mayor of Birmingham opened "Karma". Devika Rani received by the Mayor. Himansu Rai (marked with cross) (1933),



At the world's premiere of "Karma" in London. Devika Rani with Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Irwin (1933).

Film City in Bombay began its long career with "Melody And Rhythm" shot by Himansu Rai. To the left of Mr. Rai is seen the late Mr. Abdulla Fazalbhoy (1934).

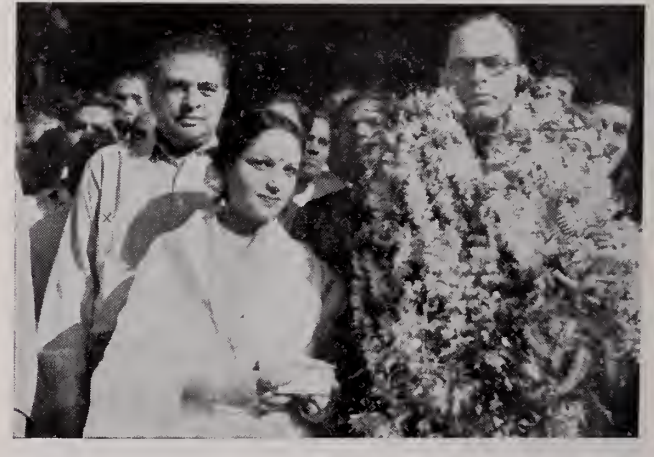
The late Lord Brabourne. Governor of Bombay watching the shooting of "Jawan-ki-Hawa" the first picture of Bombay Talkies (1935).

At the Victoria Terminus, taking special train shots for "Jawani-ki-Hawa" (1935).

Mr. Rai with Robert Flaherty the celebrated producer (1936).

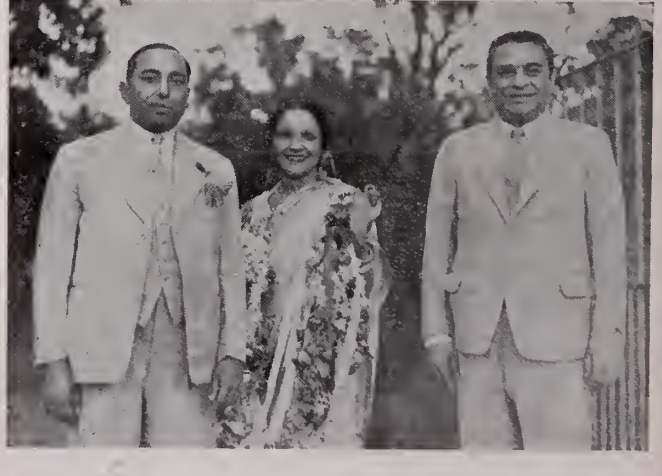
Sir Richard Temple, Sir Akbar Hydari and Mr. Rai at the Studios (1937).

When Sir Victor Sassoon visited the studios. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad is seen in black dress in the centre. (1937)



Bidding farewell to a colleague, Count Von Spretti film architect of Bombay Talkies (1938).

When the Viceroy's two daughters visited the Studios at Malad. Devika Rani is seen between them (1939)



Rai Bahadur, Rani & Rai on Devika's birthday (1939).

When the Rani Rajwade of Gwalior visited the Malad Studios (1939)

Shooting outdoors of "Narayani", the Devika Rani picture which had to be stopped owing to Mr. Rai's illness (1940)

1940 Devika Rani Birthday party. The last time Mr. Rai met people and the press. (30th March 1940)

A father to his people, we see Mr. Rai playing the "Holi" with his boys of the studio. These boys can never forget the day (1940)

The final darshan of our hero at the Bombay Talkies Studios, where human hearts became just so many flowers.

His last journey to the land from where he can never come back. But he can watch and inspire us, if we enshrine his memory in our hearts.

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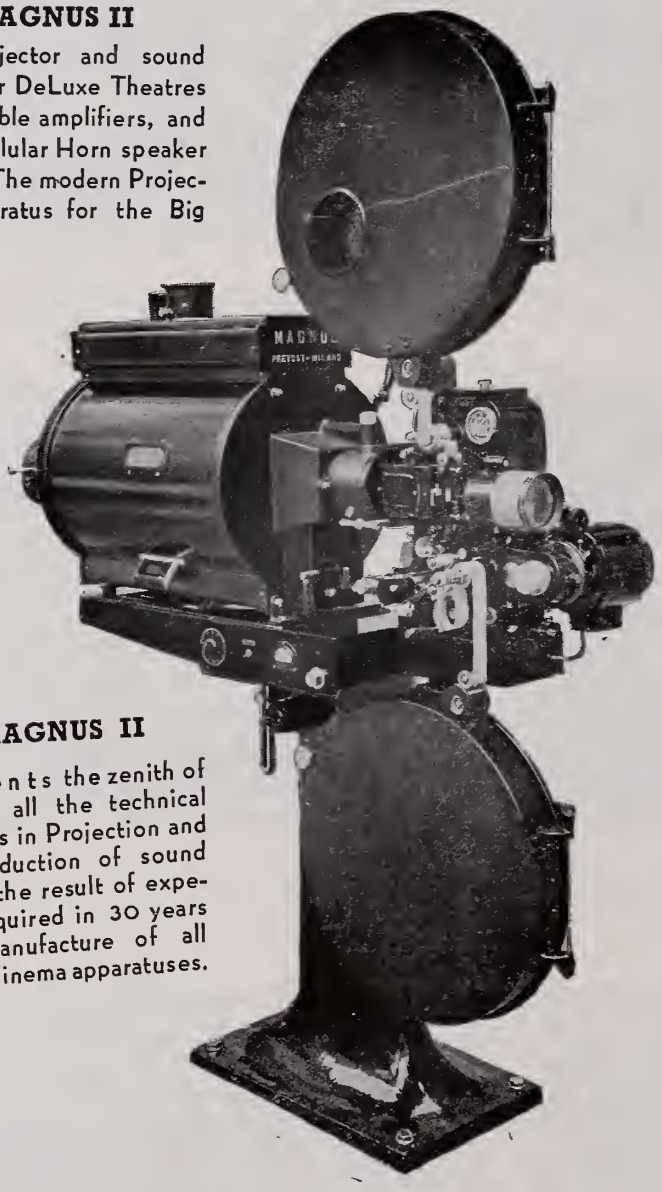

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This section is the monopoly of "JUDAS" and he writes what he likes and about things which he likes. The views expressed here are not necessarily ours, but still they carry weight because they are written by a man who knows his job.

AN UNFAIR DECISION

The Bengal Board of Film Censors is again in the news. This time, because it has refused to certify four Chinese films, "Fight To The Last", "The Lone Battalion In Shanghai", "Songs" and "China News" on the grounds that they are Anti-Japanese propaganda films, containing scenes of cruelty and torture and as such likely to wound the susceptibilities of the Japanese.

No one ever accused the Bengal Board of patriotism but it amuses us to see all this consideration being shown to the Japanese, when the members of the Board had the cheek to grant a certificate to "Gunga Din" a picture which people unanimously considered to be a slander on India.

Is it because the Japanese are so clever in taking away from the Englishmen their trousers at the least provocation ?

In any case, we cannot understand, why the members of the Bengal Board of Film Censors should consider themselves as trustees of the British trousers.

The least that the Bengal Board can do in fairness to the oppressed Chinese, is to certify their films for release in India.

In any case these pictures, if released, will reveal to the Indians, the Japanese version of German atrocities perpetrated on peace loving people. These pictures will certainly help the British in their war propaganda.

DISHONEST AGENTS of "filmindia"

During the last six months we have received numerous complaints from our readers, that the agents and stall keepers in different parts of the country are profiteering in the sales of "filmindia".

Proofs have been sent to us where agents have charged as much as Re. 1-4 for a single copy of "filmindia" saying that it was the last copy available.

It is quite true that we are not in a position to supply fully the demand for copies owing to the necessity of observing war economy. But that does not justify the action of the agents in trying to bleed the readers. Readers must not pay more than eight annas for a copy.

Another game generally indulged in by dishonest agents is that of giving out copies for reading at one anna per person. As many as thirty persons are reported to have read a single copy, giving to the agent a net income of Re. 1-14 per copy.

The copy, itself, is returned to us as unsold and refund is taken for it.

We have to assure our readers that a strict watch is being kept on agents suspected of these practices and several of them will be struck off our books within the next few weeks. If our readers therefore do not get their copies, they have to write to us and send either the subscription for a year or eight annas in postal stamps for a single copy.

Very often, several agents are not given supplies because they have not paid our previous dues. So, next time if you do not receive your copy by the 10th of every month from your agent, you know what has happened.

We shall appreciate complaints of this nature from our readers in different towns, but definite proofs are needed before we take any action.

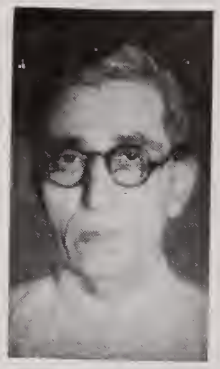
BETTER SOUND IN BETTER THEATRES

War or no war, Jagannath Patel is the last man to be beaten in his business. When "Bauer" projectors went off the board with the outbreak of war, he went out and brought in the "Prevost" Italian projectors, which Jagannath has already started planting in different towns with the same zest with which he made for "Bauer" a brilliant trade name in the East.

And now he has dazzled every one by bringing into the country the hitherto exclusive sound equipment known as the "Lansing Sound System". Licensed by Electrical Research Products under the patents of Western Electric, the Lansing Sound System has acquired a world-wide reputation as the most reliable sound equipment in the world. The fact that the Granmon's Chinese Theatre of Hollywood, where the world's best pictures are shown, relies upon the Lansing Shearer Horn Sound System to please its patrons, is the biggest certificate any sound equipment can ever get.

Jagannath Patel's enterprise once again, has given India something exclusive in the reproduction of sound in our theatres. Thanks!

THRICE WELCOME—NATIONAL STUDIOS!



Chimanlal Desai

National Studios under the joint captainship of Seth Chimanlal Desai and Yusufally Fazalbhoy deserve our congratulations for the superb production of their maiden picture "Woman".

"Woman" is a glorious beginning for any studio in India. The combined experience of Seth Chimanlal in Sagar and Mr. Fazalbhoy in General Films seems to have provided the necessary background for the success of "Woman" in which we find a marvellous degree of co-ordination of the different elements that contribute to the completion of a good picture.

All that we now expect of National Studios is to maintain the same high standard of production with which they launched their first picture.

SIR RAHIMTOOLA—BABURAO PATEL—AND "WOMAN"

"We want your co-operation and friendly guidance. We want our journalist friends to offer responsible and constructive criticism; we want them to point out our defects, drawbacks and shortcomings; that is the way you can help us; it is this assistance from the press that will lead the film industry to healthy progress" said Sir Rahimtoola Chinoy, Chairman of the Board of Directors of National Studios Ltd., while welcoming a gathering of over a thousand guests for the preview of "WOMAN" at the Pathe Cinema in Bombay, on the 9th May, 1940.

Invited by Sir Rahimtoola to speak on the occasion, Mr. Baburao Patel, President of the Film Journalists' Association of India said:

Yusufally Fazalbhoy

"It has become the fashion for our producers to invite film journalists on such ceremonial occasions and by bringing them into the limelight, remind them once again of their duties to the film industry.

"Strangely enough, these people who remind us of our duty conveniently forget their own obligations to the press. While they constantly harp on the old and tiresome theme of wanting constructive criticism from the journalists, they themselves fail to cultivate the correct spirit of approach which will help them to understand the real significance of good criticism.

"To say the least our producers do not appreciate the importance of the press in the development of the film industry. They do not even extend the courtesy of good seats to the journalists at previews and premieres. In refreshing contrast to this procedure of our people, the foreign producers often treat the journalists with an extra measure of courtesy by giving them the best seats in the theatre.

Rahimtoola Chinoy

"A recent example, where this consideration paid big dividends was at the premiere of "Gone With The Wind" at the Metro in Bombay. The paper men gave a huge spontaneous break to the picture.

"I do not think that the relations between the journalists and the producers will ever improve unless the feeling of mutual distrust is gone. The producers are still very sensitive to the newspaper criticism however well meant it be and at the least provocation only too willingly they put the old and rusty brake of gagging independent views by stopping paid advertisements.

"In newspapers, where the film critic is at best just one more poorly paid employee working under an employer with an over developed advertisement revenue complex, this procedure of the producers assumes a complexion of blackmail, leaving the poor worker with no defence."

Referring to the necessity of producing pictures with a specific social significance, Mr. Patel said, "It is rather an impotent way of making money by producing pictures for "mere and sheer" entertainment. We want pictures with a particular design which will elevate our life socially, culturally and intellectually. In these days of national struggle, the producers must realise their grave responsibility in providing the right type of fare to the millions who see our pictures from day to day. If they harness the immense potentialities of the film to give our people an entertainment with a higher purpose, then the film will have contributed its all to the building of a new nation.

Dwelling upon the chronic complaint of want of finance and financiers in our film industry, Mr. Patel continued, "It is a welcome news to all in this industry that the Investment Corporation of India Ltd., a financing concern of the Tatas has associated itself with the National Studios. The illustrious traditions of the Tatas in our other national industries and their success give me hopes of a brilliant future for our film industry. I want the executives of the National Studios to remember that on their future activities will depend the continuance of this splendid contribution. They must all work hard and on the right lines to keep the Tatas in our film industry. For, once we

Baburao Patel

lose this enterprising and princely house of finance, we won't have another for a long time to come."

Reverting to film criticism, Mr. Patel pointed out that the words of Sir Rahimtoola as the Chairman of National Studios while calling for the co-operation of the journalists and inviting them to criticise, have a great significance.

"I want the National Studios and for that matter all the other sudios" continued Mr. Patel, "to write Sir Rahimtoola's opinion about film criticism on their gates and read it every time they find their pictures reviewed in the papers. Doing so will save a lot of misunderstandings. I am going to frame Sir Rahimtoola's speech in my office, and whenever opportunity demands I shall not fail to remind the National Studios of what their own Chairman said. I shall see that big people do not use their words lightly."

Describing the riding accident to Mr. Surendra on the previous day, Mr. Patel struck a deep note of sympathy in the following words: "While we are all here in a spirit of entertainment, the hero of this picture lies unconscious in the J.J. Hospital having met with a serious accident in his attempt to give us all an entertainment.

"As an honest worker in our studios, he takes all my sympathy and whenever in this picture, he thrills you with pleasure, remember that the man himself lies in pain."

In wishing "WOMAN" and National Studios success Mr. Patel hoped that he was voicing the sentiments of his other comrades.

SQUARE DEAL TO OUR THEATRE WORKERS

Since 1936 "filmindia" has been carrying on a ceaseless agitation through its columns asking for a square deal for our theatre workers. Numerous representations were made to the Government in this matter and at last the Bombay Act No. XXV of 1939, popularly known as the Shop Assistants' Act was passed.

The provisions of the said Act in so far as they apply to our theatres are mentioned below :—

Leela Chitnis and Ashok Kumar in "Azad".

Mr. Baburao Patel, President of the Film Journalists' Association of India, addressing the guests at the premiere of "Woman" at Pathe Cinema, Bombay, Standing beside him are Sir Rahimtoola Chinoy, Mr. Yusufally Fazalbhoy and Mr. Chimanlal Desai.

"Children who have not completed the 12th year shall not be employed. It seems there are boys and young persons employed in the hotel restaurant who may be under 12. It should be made clear to the authorities that the restaurant is a lease operated by others, that the theatre has no control over the persons employed in the restaurant and that the responsibility of employing the restaurant staff is that of the lessee. The name and address of the lessee should be given."

"The 24 hours of the day in cinema theatre shall commence with the hour at which the employees are to begin their employment. For, example: if the employees are called upon to attend at 3 P.M. the theatre day will begin at 3 P.M. However, since under the Police Regulations all theatres must close at 12-30 A.M. the theatre day whatever the hour of commencement must be over at 12-30 A.M. for the purposes of the Shop Assistants' Act."

"The employees to whom the Act applies are operator, clerk, door-keeper, usher or *others employed in similar other capacity.* As a matter of fact the Act applies to all those working in the theatre except the employer or a member of his family dependent on him, or any person or persons occupying positions of management or employed in a confidential capacity. A list of persons with designations to whom the Act does not apply has to be submitted to the authorities."

"The maximum hours of employment must not exceed 10 hours per day. If the hours of employment per day exceed 6 but do not exceed 8 hours the employee must have at least half an hour's interval for rest. If the hours of employment exceed 8 but do not exceed 10 hours per day, the employee must have at least an hour's interval for rest. The hours of work can, for the convenience of the employer, be so spread out that, with the interval for rest, the same do not exceed 14 hours in any one day."

"For example, if the hours of work are from 2-30 P.M. to after 10-30 P.M. an interval for rest of an hour must be given at 8-30 P.M. at the latest. If the hours of work are from 2-30 P.M. to between 8-30 and 10-30 P.M. an interval for the rest of half an hour must be given at 8-30 P.M. at the latest. But if the hours of work are from 2-30 P.M. to 8-30 P.M. sharp only, no interval for rest need be given."

"The employees must be given at least one day in a week as a holiday, with full pay, the week to commence from any day that may suit the convenience of the employer. Accordingly a batch of employees may have Monday as a holiday, a second batch on Tuesday, a third batch on Wednesday, and so on till all the employees on the register have had the weekly holiday."

"Young persons who are older than 12 but who have not completed their seventeenth year must not be employed after 7 P.M. and even then for not more than 42 hours a week or 7 hours per day including the interval for rest, the seventh day of the week being a holiday with pay."

"Since it is the practice of most theatres to have morning shows on Sundays and Holidays, it must be borne in mind that even on these days the hours of work must not exceed 10 per day. If employees are called to attend at 9-30 A.M. on these days their work for the day, with the intervals for rest, must end at 11-30 P.M. But since the regular shows begin only at about 1-30 or 1-45 P.M., it would be advisable to call the smallest number of employees for the morning shows because of the necessity to let them off before the 14th hour of their day of employment is over. *It should be noted that overtime work in places of entertainment is not allowed.*"

"Every employer must exhibit in a prominent place the hours of work for the following week including the hours of attendance for morning shows. Any change in the notified hours of attendance must be notified to the Authorities 24 hours before the change comes into operation."

DON'T MISS THESE

1. **"Woman" produced by National Studios and directed by Mehboob. An impressive spectacle featuring Sardar Akhtar, Surendra, Yakub and others.**
2. **"Chingari" produced by Sudama Productions and directed by Badami. A sympathetic melodrama featuring Sabita Devi and Prithviraj.**

Both the pictures will seriously contend for the 1940 Award of the Film Journalists' Association Of India.

BABURAO PATEL.

Mr. W. And in conclusion, Gentlemen, let me add that CARRIER EQUIPMENT is unrivalled throughout the world.

F. P. 1. *But if what you say is true, surely some studios have put in plant.*

Mr. W. They have. PRABHAT FILM Co., BOMBAY FILM LABORATORY. FAMOUS CINE LABORATORY. KODAK FILM Co. In India all have CARRIER EQUIPMENT just as the leading Studios in Hollywood.

F. P. 2 *Admittedly throwing water about and using ice and punkhas is a messy business but it's cheap.*

Mr. W. Not when all the losses of time and material are added up. CARRIER AIR CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT SAVES in damage to costume and make up, in FILM LOSSES, AND FIRE HAZARD.

F. P. 3 *It is too hot and sticky to continue arguing. I'm convinced we need Carrier and they have the experts who can give our problems the proper attention.*

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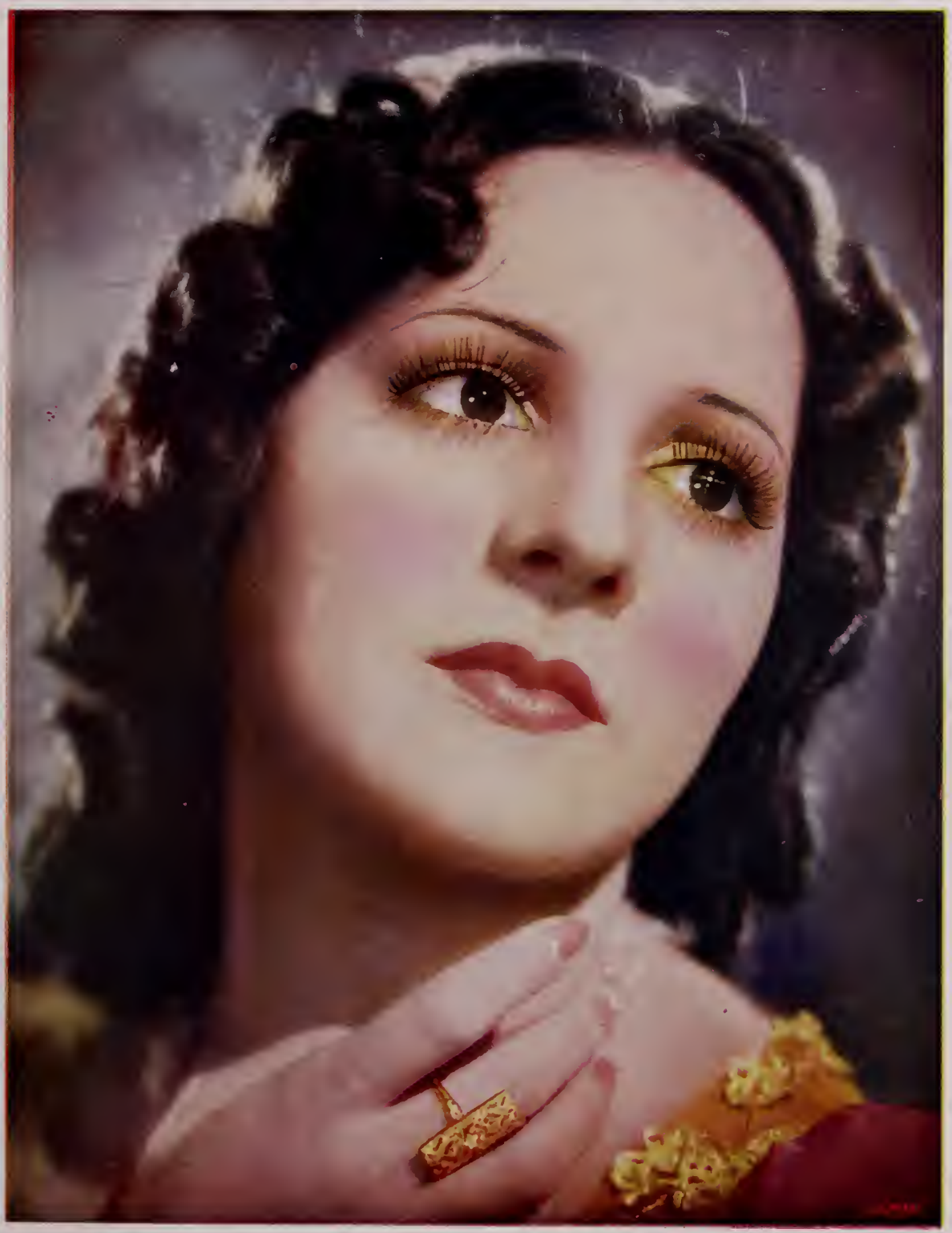

MADHURI—This Ranjit charmer will once again be seen in "Pagal" a social picture directed by A. R. Kardar.

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Leela Chitnis, Ashok Kumar

Watch the Newspapers

Sudden Death of Mr. Himansu Rai!

Entire Film Industry Shocked!

India Loses Her Favourite Artist!

Mr. Himansu Rai, artist, producer and the founder of the Bombay Talkies Ltd., died on Sunday the 19th May at 1 A.M. at Dr. Bacha's Nursing Home, Bombay, after a month's illness following a nervous breakdown due to overwork.

Mr. Rai was only 48, and leaves behind him his wife, three sisters and an aged father besides friends all over the world to mourn his loss.

Coming from an highly educated and cultured family of Bengal, Mr. Rai after his early education proceeded to England and passed out as a bar-at-law. After working for some time at the India Office, he took to the amateur stage with great success.

PASSION FOR ART

Very soon he entered the movies and in association with the U. F. A. of Berlin produced several international pictures.

His outstanding successes were "Light of Asia", "Throw Of The Dice", "Shiraz" and "Karma", the last one starred Devika Rani, his wife.

In all these pictures, besides producing them, Mr. Rai acted the hero with signal success.

Returning to India in 1934, he founded the Bombay Talkies Ltd., with an influential Board of Directors. And in association with his wife (Devika Rani) and his friend Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall, he brought the concern to the forefront within a year.

The leading position in which the Bombay Talkies are today is the result of the vision and perseverence of Mr. Rai to whom for full five years, the studio had become his home and its office-room had become his hearth.

FUNERAL FROM THE STUDIOS

As if in keeping with his silent desire, the body of Mr. Rai lay in state in the studio premises and thousands of people paid their last floral tribute to his memory.

The funeral which took place at two in the afternoon was attended by several people from the city, prominent among them being: Sir Richard Temple, Jamnadas Morarji, V. Shantaram, Sardar Chandulal Shah, Chimanlal Desai, Baburao Pai, Ramniklal Mohanlal, Seth Kapurchand. Y. A. Fazalbhoy, H. C. Lal, K. A. Abbas and Baburao Patel.

The premature death of Mr. Rai our leading pioneer is a great loss to the film industry in India. To Devika Rani, we extend our sincerest sympathy in her grief.

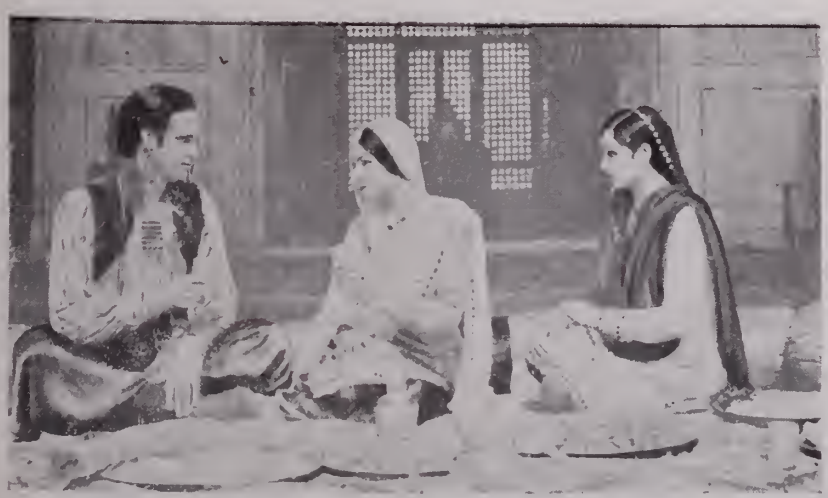
JOURNALISTS PAY THEIR TRIBUTE

At a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Film Journalists' Association of India held on Monday afternoon, 20th May, '40, the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

"The Executive Committee of the Film Journalists' Association of India has learnt with deep regret of the death of Mr. Himansu Rai, the founder of the Bombay Talkies Ltd., and a leading producer of the Indian film industry.

"While deeply mourning the death of Mr. Himansu Rai and extending their sincerest sympathies to Mrs. Devika Rani Rai, the members of Mr. Rai's family, and the staff of the Bombay Talkies Ltd., the Committee recalls the splendid services to the Indian Film industry rendered by Mr. Himansu Rai during the 18 years that he was associated with it as artiste, director and producer.

"His pioneering efforts to improve the cultural content of Indian films and to introduce a healthier and more congenial atmosphere in the studio, his successful enterprise which introduced for the first time Indian films to the international market, and his work as the founder and producer of the Bombay Talkies Ltd., which contributed to the progressive trends in the Indian films and secured the co-operation of



With wine and women in "Hatimtai-ki-Beti" a Mohan picture.

educated and cultured persons as artistes and technicians, have created for him a unique and abiding place in the history of the Indian film industry and in the hearts of all those who came into contact with him, particularly film journalists."

"MODEL FOR ANY MAN"

In a press note, Mr. V. Shantaram, India's best director and partner of Prabhat says:

"The news of the premature death of Mr. Himansu Rai came as a shock to me. It is difficult to realise that so vital a personality is no more.

"The untiring zeal and the single-minded devotion of Mr. Rai are a model for any man in or outside the film industry.

"I tender my sincere condolences to Mrs. Devika Rani and to the Bombay Talkies Ltd. I am sure that the great institution that Mr. Rai has built up will carry on his good work and make itself an ever growing monument to his proud memory."

"A CREATIVE FORCE"

Mr. Chimanlal Desai, Managing Director of the National Studios said: "Mr. Rai was a creative force in the industry, on which the influence of his character was as wholesome as that of his art. It will be a worthy ideal for any person of self confidence in the industry, to fill the large gap created by Mr. Rai's demise."

"IN LETTERS OF GOLD"

Mr. Sohrab Mody, the Minerva Chief and President of the Film Artistes Association of India says, "His own career as an artiste and his contribution to the histrionic wealth of our screen will be inscribed in letters of gold in the history of India's screen and culture.

"By the sad demise of a great man our industry has suffered an irreparable loss."

"A GREAT LOSS"

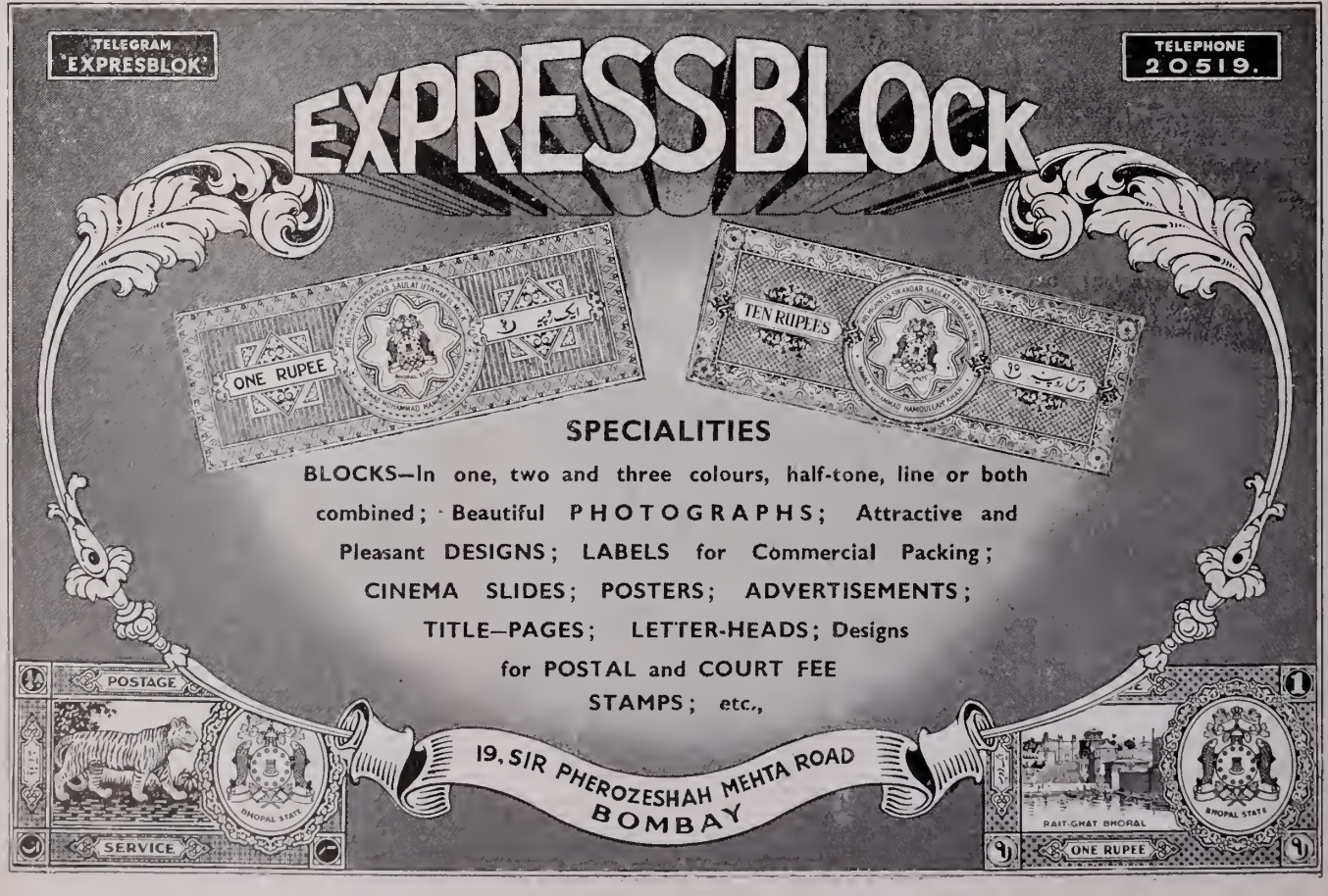
Sardar Chandulal Shah, Proprietor of Ranjit Movietone says, "The news of Mr. Rai's death was a shock to me. He was one of the topmost producers and his premature death is a great loss, not only to the Bombay Talkies, but to the whole film industry when it badly requires persons of his calibre, intelligence and hard-working spirit."

"AN ELDER BROTHER TO ME"

Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall, General Manager of the Bombay Talkies Ltd. said, "I have never met a sturdier leader, a more loyal friend, a steadier organizer, a more sincere worker and a more just man. To me he was a guide and a friend: more, he was in a real sense in the position of an elder brother.

"It may be truly said that Mr. Rai laid down his life in the cause of the great ideal which he always entertained for the motion picture in India. He died in harness and he had hardly any other interest in life than the country's progress towards that ideal."

Thus died a great man. May God grant his soul that peace in death which he denied himself in his lifetime.



Our Review

Badami Becomes "Chhota" Barua!

Sabita's Beautiful Performance In "Chingari"

Poor Publicity Kills Audience Support

It was a pleasant surprise to note the remarkable improvement in the technique and presentation of "Chingari" after what we saw in "As You Please", Sudama's first picture.

"Chingari" is a pretty poem of beautiful design and good rhythm. It is a pity that a picture like this, which more people ought to see, is allowed to run around quietly because of lack of sufficient and correct publicity. "Chingari" certainly deserved better consideration than was given to it during its release in Bombay. A really good picture is so often a matter of a lucky accident, but when you get one, it is but proper that the lucky producer should shout about it from the house-tops. "Chingari" has suffered exactly because its producers chose to keep mum about their production.

With "Chingari" Badami almost becomes a "Chhota" Barua, so closely has he emulated the methods of the well known director of Bengal.

AN OLD OLD TALE, BUT—

The story is simple and it is very familiar, being found in every third Hindu home. But in its clever development for the screen, it presents a novelty to the audiences.

Anuradha in "Bahurani"

Geeta, a victim of social cruelty, is leading a lonely life, though married. She lives with her brother, who is too poor to support her. She has been driven out by her father-in-law because of her mother's bad name etc. When the story opens, the father-in-law is dead, and her husband Biren, with a child on hand from his other wife (also dead) is in a mood to effect a reconciliation with his first wife. But Geeta, still smarting under the insult flung at her mother, refuses to make up, and continues to live with her brother.

CHINGARI

Producers:	*Sudama Productions*
Adaptation:	*S C. Chatterjee's "Pandit Mahashaya."*
Dialogues & Songs:	*J. S. Casshyap.*
Director:	*Sarvottam Badami.*
Photography:	*Dronacharya.*
Audiography:	*T. C. Patel*
Music:	*Jnan Dutt*
Editing:	*N. V. Morajkar.*
Cast:	*Sabita Devi, Meera, Sunalini, Prithviraj, E. Billimoria. K. Date.*
Released At:	Imperial Cinema, Bombay.
Date of Release:	4th May 1940

Her resistance to the reconciliation is the theme of the subsequent sequences which lead to one grand climax where the husband and the wife are ultimately reconciled at the sick bed of their son, Charan.

In between the two ends of the tale there are some inevitable elements of story-making like hunger, storms, singing sadhus, cholera and convenient deaths. But even without these the story would have still remained a good screen play, as the original theme had plenty of human appeal in it.

Dr. Ambalal Patel—now let him know from this review that he has produced a really good picture in "Chingari."

GOOD DIRECTION AND TECHNIQUE

Very nicely directed, the picture has become a soothing screen play for the intellectuals. Least obtrusive, the fine photography contributed a lot to the excellence of the picture. The same, however cannot be said of the recording, which is faulty at several places.

After a long time, Sabita has given a beautiful performance which for its sheer sincerity is outstanding. I am still of the opinion that she should not sing in her pictures. Her bad singing, always unnecessary, lessens the intrinsic merit of her otherwise excellent performance.

It was a great pleasure to see E. Billimoira make a reappearance on the screen. In a very sympathetic role, this old timer gave a good seasoned performance and I hope many more roles of similar nature will come his way in future.

Prithviraj was quite good. Others don't matter.

In short, "Chingari" is a good picture and too good for Sudama and you should not miss seeing it.

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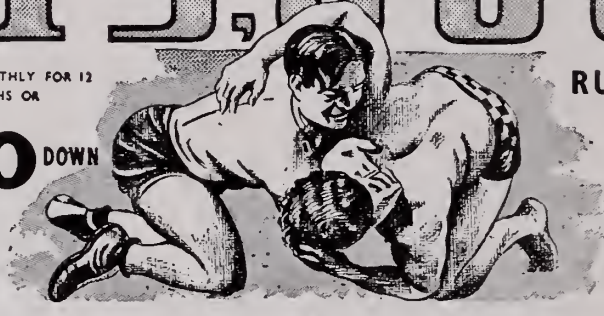

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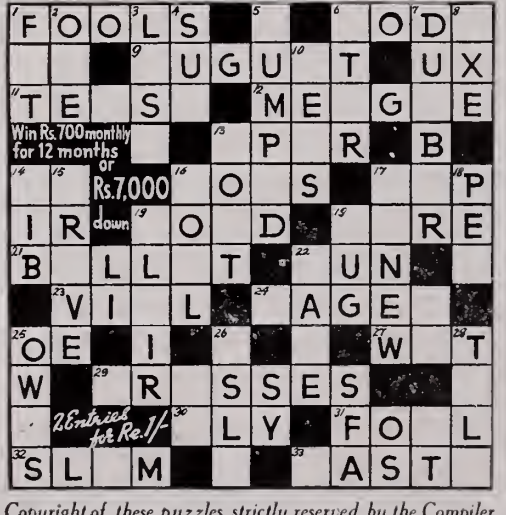
Some of you might be tempted to face the dangers of an all-in wrestling match if you had a reasonable opportunity of winning Rs. 8,400. You have such an opportunity here. There are no dangers to face, however, because it is a mental wrestling match. Nevertheless, if you tackle the Clues in the right spirit you will find them just as gripping as any physical combat can be. And the entry fee is the trifling sum of Re. 1 for two entries. But you must remember that this is a contest of commonsense and the puzzle must be solved in the light of cool and careful judgment. Far-sighted solvers will therefore get busy at once on the Practice Square below and thus have ample time to consider the problems posed.

CLUES ACROSS

1. Men are singularly adept at making these of themselves
6. Whisky is commonly drunk with this water
9. Majestic or venerable
11. Employees are apt to dislike being supervised by man who is always this
12. Scanty
13. Stout pole
16. Wise men are not given to talking much about their personal these
17. A slight blow
19. Edibles
20. In this place
21. Method of secret voting
22. *Commonsense Crosswords* provide you with good this for your money
23. Small vessel for holding liquid
24. A man's these are apt to give a false impression of his worth
27. Man of few words is often mistakenly regarded as being this
29. Badly cut ones are apt to be very disfiguring
30. Nowadays, bachelors who wish to remain so, need to be this!
31. As a rule the more vain a person is the easier he is to this
32. Apt to have a jarring effect on nerves of sensitive person
33. As we grow older we tend to avoid undue this

CLOSING DATE, JUNE 14th.

N.B.—The Entry Fee in this Competition is Re. 1 for 2 Entry Squares and Entry Forms will be published in the issue of June 2nd.



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ONLY ENTRY FORMS
CUT OUT FROM
"THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA"
of June 2nd
will be accepted.

CLUES DOWN

1. Corpulent
2. Single unit
3. Loose one sometimes causes one's vision to be impaired
4. Prosecute
5. Most of us are apt to resent being deliberately this
6. Celestial body
7. Indian levee
8. Chopping tool
10. Oceans
13. Black substance condensed from coal smoke
14. Probably most of us are apt to do this when asked unexpectedly for a rather big loan
15. To defy the law is usually a this thing to do
16. Soft this is apt to become easily entangled when carelessly handled
17. To restore to original state
18. Vigour
19. Intuitive instinct for what is excellent
20. Close embrace
22. Generally speaking, men are more easily excited than women by one
25. Threatening demands are sometimes made on person who this a lot of money
26. Ceylon is one
28. As a rule, the brighter this is the more interest it evokes

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The EDITOR'S MAIL

[In this section, the editor himself replies to queries from the readers. As thousands of letters are received every month—some anxious and several frivolous—it is neither possible nor convenient to attend to all. Selected letters are usually treated in an informative and humorous strain and no offence is meant to anyone.]

L. M. Nandekeolyar (Patna)

Who is the greater director, Barua or Shantaram ?

To rate exactly the talents of the directors, one has to take notice of their recent productions. After "Admi" few directors can come near Shantaram in greatness. Shantaram's art in realism will remain a dream of the other directors for a long long time.

H. E. Khan (Poona).

To what community does Director Fatehlal of Prabhat belong ?

For you, he is a Syed and a Sunni Mahomedan. But to us, he belongs to the international community of artists.

H. G. Shah (Calcutta)

I want to invest some money in Navyug Chitrapat Ltd. Will it be a safe investment ?

I suppose so, seeing that the people who made Huns Pictures such a big success are at the back of this new concern.

B. Ramaiah (Kalahasti).

I am crazy about "filmindia". But I can't afford to purchase one every month. What am I to do ?

Don't read it. I don't like people who become crazy. I have seen enough producers and directors going crazy. I don't want readers to add to that list.

M. Mahomed Sirdar (Madura)

Which is the best institute in India for learning cinematography and recording ?

The Abdulla Fazalbhoy Institute controlled by the St. Xavier's College in Bombay. Its address is Dhobi Talao, Fort, Bombay.

Mohan A. Sham (Hyderabad Sindh).

Which picture is Mr. Kardar directing now ?

Kardar is now working for the National Studios Ltd., and is directing "Puja" a socia story featuring Sardar Akhtar.

P. R. Patel (Nagpur.)

From all points of view, rate the following pictures: 1. Zindagi, 2. Devdas, 3. Vidyapati, 4. Admi ?

Read your own list the other way and you will get correct rating from all points of view.

R. Venkatraman (Madanpalle).

How to become a Baburao Patel or rather a film journalist ?

It is a thankless job to become a Baburao Patel, as all that I have so far collected is a good assortment of cordial abuse from the devotees of capitalism in the film industry. My other comrade Abbas is also showing the same symptoms. The safest course therefore is to become a film journalist of a North India variety as seen in some film magazines of the North, as people don't expect much from them and they don't have to give much

SHOBHANA SAMARTH stars in "Soubhagya", a Hindusthan Cinetone picture.

A Story Woven Round the hearts of Every Home! And acted by the Heroines of all Homes!

DHARMA PATNI

• IN TELUGU •

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P. PULLAIAH B.A.

Music by

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GOLKHAR'S BUNGALOW, KOLHAPUR

AND NOW IN PRODUCTION

DAMAJI
(Marathi)
"TUMCHA DEV"

The Heartrending Tale of a Great Devotee of Lord Vithoba written by Bhal G. Pendharkar, the Celebrated writer of Maharashtra

Directed by **GUNJAL**

in return. And it doesn't need much education either to be known as this type of a film journalist.

H. G. Shah (Benares).

The writings in "Round The Town" (Reviews) and in "Studio News" are often contradictory. May I know which between the two truly reflects your own opinion ?

The reviewing section represents my own views, while the studio news are reports received from the producers themselves and as such reports are always in advance of the release of the pictures, they are often too optimistic and exaggerated. The Studio News section is only intended to give a report of the activities in different studios.

Bhishma Singh (Bhagalpur)

Why dont you ask Kumar and Pahari Sanyal to eat less and work more ? I don't think, there are any Marwari companies in India where they can be cast as "seths"?

In asking Kumar and Pahari to eat less, you have taken the words out of my mouth. But with the other things they eat, they seem to eat our words too and digest them too well. As regards the Marwari companies, I think they also require streamlined heroes to make money in their pictures

Has your wife seen your photographs with Hollywood stars appearing in "filmindia"? How did you explain that away?

The very fact that I returned to India and alone gave me a fresh lease of respectability...The other explanation was a discreet silence.

G. S. Karimy (Karachi)

What chances, if any, has an educated man of joining the film line as an apprentice to a director ?

None! As most of the directors being themselves uneducated in the sense you are educated, the post of an educated assistant to a director does not exist. Apart from this, the entry into this industry is as difficult as that into any other industry with nepotism and favouritism running wild. But, if you happen to be related, even distantly, to a director, a hero or a heroine, your chances are not altogether hopeless.

Nanoobhai B. Patel (Bombay)

"Woman—the greatest mystery on earth" says a poster, advertising the maiden production of National Studios. Will you tell me why a woman is the greatest mystery ?

Since Adam began his first move, the woman has always defied his imagination. Eve has always kept Adam guessing through ages and man has not yet been able to solve this often cruelly beautiful riddle. Leaving the woman to the mercy of God and resigning himself to her tender mercies, man took up a position of least resistance and agreed to run the show under the delusion of being the "stronger" sex.

The game has been going on through ages and as the results have been quite encouraging people don't ask questions but quietly accept the mystery surrounding the woman.

To a man, a woman is a daughter, a wife or a mother and in this triple acceptance he ends his research of her.

It was a happy gathering of over 1,000 guests at the All-India premiere of "Woman" the maiden production of National Studios Ltd., at the Pathe Cinema, Bombay.

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Cuticura
PREPARATIONS

Chandra Kumar (Poona)

Thanks, for the three photos of your girl friend. She seems to be quite a formidable proposition for the screen. I do not think, she has any chance of becoming a film star. Ask her to get married. (The Editor).

K. Mohammed Ebrahim (Balehonnur).

Where is Yakub who once worked in Sagar?

He is now with the Sagar-General combination known as National Studios and you can see him in their first picture, "Woman", in which Yakub has given the best performance of his career.

M. V. Krishnaswamy (Mysore)

You have lavished all possible praise upon "Admi" the brilliant production of Prabhat. You have acclaimed it as the best picture of 1939 and accorded to it a niche of enviable distinction. I for one, certainly agree with you on all essentials, though let me confess, I can not allow myself to fly into lyrical raptures, over this precocious child of Shantaram. My objection is purely from the point of view of art, pure and simple. The director has introduced an episode satirising the proverbially fashionable director of our film industry and also pouring subtle if not good humoured ridicule on certain rival companies. Apart from the intrinsic excellence of the episode, I wish to know how far it fits into the artistic texture of the play. Don't you think that apart from being a blemish on an otherwise artistic play, it also betrays a lapse of taste on the part of the director indulging in such cheap and malicious satire? Surely, the limit of decency is crossed when the girl in the skirt is stripped of her saree.

I appreciate your confession. The sight of the inevitable skirt below the saree was the dawn of disappointment to several anxious eyes. There was nothing indecent in the gesture of stripping the girl of the upper garment. By stripping her thus and showing her true dress, Shantaram showed how little these Anglo-Indian girls sacrificed for art, subtly suggesting that all they liked in this game of movie-making was the money part of it. The scene of the proverbially fashionable director was certainly a satire on the existing conditions in our industry, but it had no malice in it as you seem to think. By showing this scene on the screen, Shantaram has given a chance to such directors to see themselves with the eyes of the world...I admit that this incident is a strange design in the general texture of the play. But don't you think that it provides a much needed relief in an otherwise psychologically provocative drama?

My naming "Admi" as the best picture of the year does not influence the journalist folks who are used to individual thinking and they would not be led by anyone. And over 90% of such people, voted "ADMI" as the best picture by a Blind Ballot.

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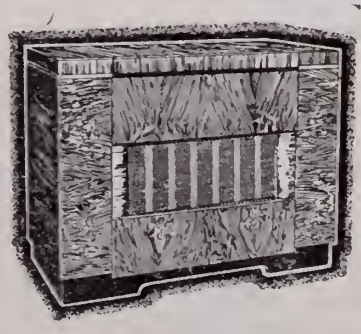

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W A D I A ' S
NEWEST PICTURE

Our Review

"Azad" Keeps The Colours Flying !

Saradindu's Beautiful Story !

Ashok Kumar And Hansa Thrill !

Saradindu Bannerjee is one of those rare writers who succeed in overlapping dramatic situations in a soothing and harmonious way without creating sharp and jolting contrasts. In "Azad", the latest Bombay Talkies' social story, the art of its writer is evident from scene to scene—the way situations slip into one another without the least clash or contrast.

It takes some time for the audience to get used to this picture and before the interval interest has to be kept alive by an exercise of the desire to see more. But after the interval, in the characteristic Saradindu way, the story gathers drama and climax and rivets the attention of all.

CLASH OF IDEALS!

Opening in the shadows of college life, we find Vijay, Jagdish and Loknath, all friends, airing their pet views on modernity and conservatism. Loknath is dogmatic in his orthodox views. Vijay is tolerant in his intellectual approach of modernity, while Jagdish, being suspicious of both is not sure of his own convictions. The only common bond among them is their friendship for one another.

HANSA—in "Azad" she has developed a new personality.

In Jamuna, a fugitive from social indignities, Vijay meets his life mate and despite the wishes of Loknath and Jagdish to the contrary, Vijay marries her and settles down in life a long distance away from his friends. The friendship has been strained.

AZAD

Producers:	*Bombay Talkies Ltd.*
Story:	*Saradindu Bannerjee*
Dialogues & Songs	*J. S. Casshyap.*
Director:	*N. R. Acharya.*
Music:	*Saraswati Devi and R. Pal.*
Sound:	*M. I. Dharamsey.*
Cast:	*Leela Chitnis, Hansa, Ashok Kumar, Rama Shukul, Mumtaz Ali etc.*
Released At:	Roxy Cinema.
Date of Release:	4th May 1940

Years pass. Vijay and Jamuna are living at Ratanpur and have now a brilliant son in Anand. Jagdish has become a great lawyer and a poor widower, but has a charming daughter in Seeta. Due to one of those popular screen coincidences, Anand and Seeta meet in the train, when Anand is on way to Calcutta.

Anand, thereafter calls on Jagdish to be in the company of Seeta. Quite naturally they fall in love.

M. I. DHARAMSEY

Sound Engineer of Bombay Talkies Ltd., whose work in "Azad was well-appreciated.

EMOTIONAL CONFLICT

The story after this is the tale of turmoil going on in the heart of Jagdish. Very cleverly the author has subsided this and the friends once again meet. Anand and Seeta are married and Jamuna's existence is justified.

Forgetting the first four reels, which move rather slowly, the picture is beautifully directed. In photography and sound, the usual Bombay Talkies' standard is maintained. The music, however, is not the popular type for which the studio has been known so far.

AS GOOD AS "BHABI"

Leela Chitnis gives another beautiful performance and Hansa has improved beyond recognition. This girl is fast developing a new personality and gave a couple of good songs. Ashok Kumar has done surprisingly good work. Nazir Bedi is successful. Mumtaz is impressive towards the end. Rama Shukul is quite good. In short, almost every one has done his bit very well.

If "Bhabi" has appealed to you, well, you will also like "Azad". I liked it.

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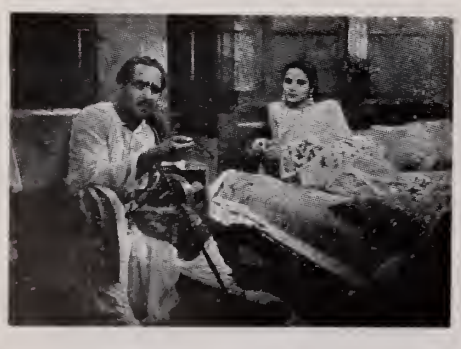

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Direction

R. S. JUNNARKAR & MUBARAK

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RAFIQUE GHAZNAVI **RAJNIKANT**

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VINOY DESAI **MICHAEL GORDON**

ERROL FLYNN—This dashing hero of the screen is again on the screen in "Virginia City" a Warner picture.

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MOHAN PICTURES

Our Review

Director Mehboob Takes The Salute

National's "Woman" Becomes A National Picture

Thrilling Screen Epic of Our 7,00,000 Villages

"Woman" the maiden production of the National Studios has become a dynamic document of realistic village life as found in our 7,00,000 villages. Never before was so faithful and detailed a portrayal of village life made as in this picture. And for its sheer documentary value, this picture will remain a milestone for a long time to come.

The story is intensely human with a pathetic yet sympathetic vein underlying the multiple aspects of a village woman's life time. There is no exaggeration anywhere and a powerful melodrama has been created with the help of numerous situations which are utterly sincere and natural. The story writer shows a great knowledge of the numerous details that contribute to make the life of the villager complete.

In presentation, the picture has become an unforgettable epic of the screen which for its sheer sincerity must appeal to all.

STORY TORN FROM LIFE

Radha the village woman opens the story as a bride, who has just accepted the harness of married life, with the same silence and resignation with which her own mother and other mothers in India did before and are doing every day. Placing her husband Shyamoo as the supreme deity in her world of the future, she begins building her new world day by day with faith and sanctity that have distinguished the traditional Indian womanhood.

Every day, from morn to night, we see her doing the numerous things that make life for the peasant woman. Now she is in the fields raising the corn which is a vital need to the family, and then working in the home to make the husband and mother-in-law happy and contented!

FAREDOON IRANI—He catches the eye with his eye-pleasing photography.

WOMAN

Producers:	*National Studios*
Director:	*Mehboob*
Story:	*Babubhai A. Mehta*
Music:	*Anil Biswas*
Dialogues:	*Vajahat Mirza*
Songs:	*Dr. Safdar*
Photography:	*Fareedoon Irani*
Sound:	*Chandrakant Pandya*
Cast:	*Sardar Akhtar, Jyoti, Sunalini, Devi, Vatsala, Yakub, Surendra, Arun, Kanhyalal, etc.*
Released At:	*Pathe Cinema, Bombay.*
Date of Release:	10th May, 1940.

In the first born child comes the supreme consummation of their wedding. It is joy all over, though over the head of the family is hanging the money lender's inevitable debt incurred for the wedding.

The poor are usually over-blessed with children. And Radha and Shyamoo soon have a crowd of four to feed in the midst of pressing demands from the money lender.

TEMPLE WITHOUT A GOD

Life soon becomes intolerable to Shyamoo, who with a characteristic lack of courage runs away from life and its responsibility by stealing out of the lives of his people.

MEHBOOB takes the lion's share of the huge success of "Woman". People forget that he had to work for it.

Radha's temple of life has now no god in it. She has now become a married 'widow'. Shamoo's flight takes away his old mother to the other world and Radha is left alone in this cruel world with four small children on hand.

And now Fate takes its turn in this game. Famine breaks out and takes a heavy toll of human life. In the midst of famine, pestilence and the threats of Sukhilala the money lender, her two boys die. On the death bed of her second son, Sukhilala goaded by passion for Radha, suggests the spreading of his bed of lust to save the life of the other two children.

CHASTITY PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD

Radha, frantic and mad with grief, decides to pledge her chastity to save her two sons from famine and pestilence. She goes to Sukhilala's house to surrender her body to the lust of the man, but is saved by divine interference in the shape of rain and storm which get Sukhilala pinned under his own roof. Radha, however, saves him and Sukhilala calls her sister, in gratitude.

Years pass and Radha has now become prosperous. Her two sons Ramu and Briju, have now grown

OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND (Warner Star)

Olivia de Havilland was born in Tokyo, Japan, on July 1st, 1916. At the ripe old age of three years Olivia came with her parents to America. During her school days Olivia played hockey, debated, won a public speaking cup, and edited the school year book. It was Olivia's school ambition to be a teacher, an author, or an actress.

She, however went to Hollywood on an impulse and asked Max Reinhardt for a part. He told her she could be understudy for the role of Hermia in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

She greatly enjoys outdoor sports, her favourites being horseback riding, swimming, tennis and badminton. She has no "beauty secrets." She can imitate a dog's bark and likes to do it unexpectedly to startle people. It does. She collects and saves love letters, programs, and things reminiscent of important or pleasant events in her life. She is five feet, four inches in height, weighs 107 pounds, has reddish brown hair and brown eyes.

Her recent screen successes are: "The Adventures of Robin Hood", "Dodge City", "Gone With The Wind", "The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex. Her next picture is "Episode".

ANIL BISWAS—At last he has given music which the talkies wanted.

up into men. Ramu is a good man but Briju becomes a vagabond.

MOTHER MURDERS SON

Through several minor conflicts we soon discover the dangerous inclinations of Briju. Midst disobedience and defiance Briju becomes a notorious dacoit. His own village he turns into a pasture for his depredations. Radha, once respected by her society as a gallant trooper in life, is now ridiculed because of her son.

Many an attempt is made by the mother and the brother to restrain and reform Briju, but to no avail. The supreme climax however comes on a well sustained story, when Briju in trying to kidnap Tulsi, a playmate of his, during her wedding ceremony, is shot dead by his own mother. Radha dies on the dead body of her son.

The screen play has a number of spots which have an intensely dramatic value. The continuity is cleverly built up making the picture a deeply sympathetic presentation of life in the villages and its peculiar problems without stepping out of the traditional limitations. In short, it is a very well written screen play with nice and appropriate dialogues.

SARDAR'S THREE-IN-ONE ROLE

Sardar Akhtar shoulders the biggest burden of acting. From the first foot of the film to the last, this artiste has given a brave performance in portraying the multiple facets of life in our villages. As the loving wife, she allows her individuality to merge into that of her husband's so completely that many a modern woman would think it to be an outrage on the inherent rights of womankind. As the daughter-in-law her complete submission to the old mother-in-law becomes an exemplary code of life in the family. But her supreme effort is manifest as the mother—loving and loved—anxious and yet helpless—doting and yet stern trying to live up to the hallowed traditions of her race.

In the role of "Radha", Sardar Akhtar has lived all the roles a woman can live in a life time. And she has done it superbly, as never before.

INIMITABLE YAKUB

From a purely histrionic point of view Yakub has given a masterly performance. He lives his part as Briju and takes applause from the audience every time he comes on the screen.

Sunalini's character portrayal as Sunder Chachi, Shyamoo's mother, is another superb performance, which while being clever is convincing.

Sukhilala, the moneylender, played by Kanahyalal, succeeds in earning the odium of the spectators and the role becomes popular in its being cordially disliked with every appearance.

SARDAR AKHTAR—Lives all the roles a woman can live.

YAKUB gives a masterly performance and takes applause.

Among others, Jyoti is growing a personality. Surendra has never sung better. Vatsala Kumptekar's lilting music pleases the people. Master Kanu Pande takes applause with his underlined tyranny of childhood. Harish as "Bansi" and Arun as "Shyamoo" have improved a bit. Brij Rani is just no good.

MUSIC AT LAST!

Anil Biswas makes a big hit with the excellent music of this picture. Punctuating the story with a number of lilting tunes, he has pushed several scenes home by his very clever background music and effects.

I am sure that Anil will give us even better work if only he is allowed to concentrate on one picture at a time.

CHARLIE in "Pagal"

Music direction is a creative job and it takes every bit of talent and energy to make it successful. In the entertaining and soothing music of "Woman", Anil shows how much can be done if pains are taken on the musical fare of a picture.

To the human eye, however, Faredoon Irani, the cameraman, is the hero. He pleases the eye every second and that is saying enough. Sound recording is a bit indifferent at places.

MEHBOOB TAKES THE SALUTE

To Mehboob, the director of this picture, however, goes the lion's share of the credit for the successful production of a screen play which is perhaps a perfect document of our village life.

BABUBHAI MEHTA — Tears a pathetic story from life itself and makes a screen play.

This is easily Mehboob's best piece of direction. It has moments of psychological heights, which come as a big surprise to many people. In the superb work of Sardar Akhtar again can be seen the guiding genius of the director who has given art and realism in a subtle but popular blend.

With "Woman", Mehboob steps into the exclusive circle of our first rank directors and leaves his erstwhile contemporaries far behind.

The triumph of "Woman" augurs well for the brilliant future of the National Studios. If "Woman" is to be the sample of their future fare in entertainment, then National will soon distinguish themselves in giving us really national entertainment.

BETTE DAVIS (Warner Star).

Bette Davis was born as Ruth Elizabeth Davis on April 5th, 1908, in Lowell, Mass. Her earliest ambition was to be a nurse, but the sight of blood cured her. Frank Conroy introduced her to George Cukor, and for sometime she worked on the Broadway stage. But Bette Davis soon went to Hollywood, and worked with Universal, but didn't seem to get anywhere. Signed by Warner Bros., she scored notably in her first picture. "The Man Who Played God."

To keep fit she does "absolutely nothing." Her favorite diet—if any—is a vegetable one. She likes potatoes—mostly mashed potatoes. She has no beauty secrets. Her favorite outdoor sports are horse-back riding and golf and she is an excellent swimmer.

Bette is five feet 3½ inches tall, weighs 106 pounds, has blue eyes and blonde hair. She won her first Oscar in 1936 by her role in "Dangerous". In 1938 she won another for "Jezebel." And she's still young.

Her outstanding successes are: "Dangerous", "Marked Woman", "Jezebel", "Dark Victory", "Juarez", "The Old Maid." And she will be soon seen in Warner's "All This And Heaven Too."

ERROL

FLYNN ★ HOPKINS

MIRIAM

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VIRGINIA CITY

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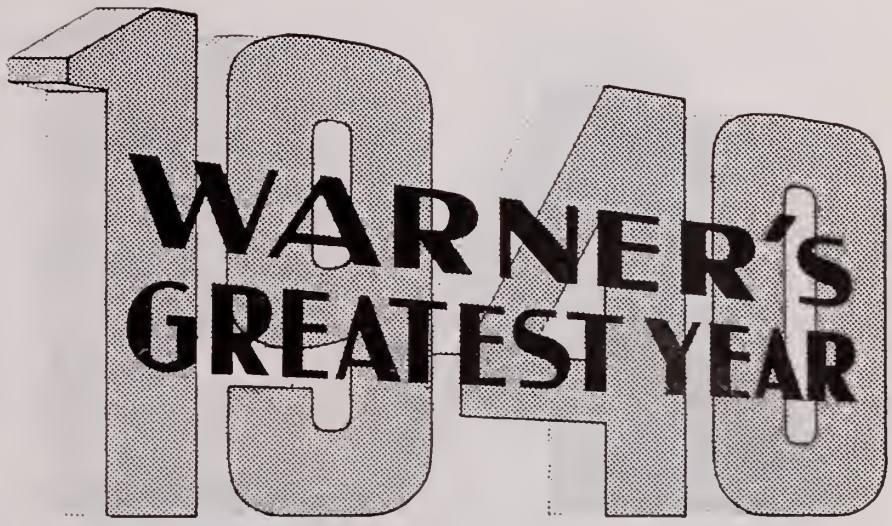

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with
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HUMPHREY BOGART

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GEORGE RAFT - JANE BRYAN
WILLIAM HOLDEN
in an outstanding melodrama
INVISIBLE STRIPES
with
FLORA ROBSON
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'TIL WE MEET AGAIN
with
PAT O'BRIEN
GERALDINE FITZGERALD
BINNIE BARNES
AND AN OUTSTANDING CAST

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in
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based on a story by Lewis E. Lawes

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one of the finest roles of his career
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ALL THIS, AND HEAVEN TOO
with
BARBARA O'NEIL
JEFFREY LYNN
AND AN ALL STAR CAST

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JAMES CAGNEY - ANN SHERIDAN
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TORRID ZONE

*

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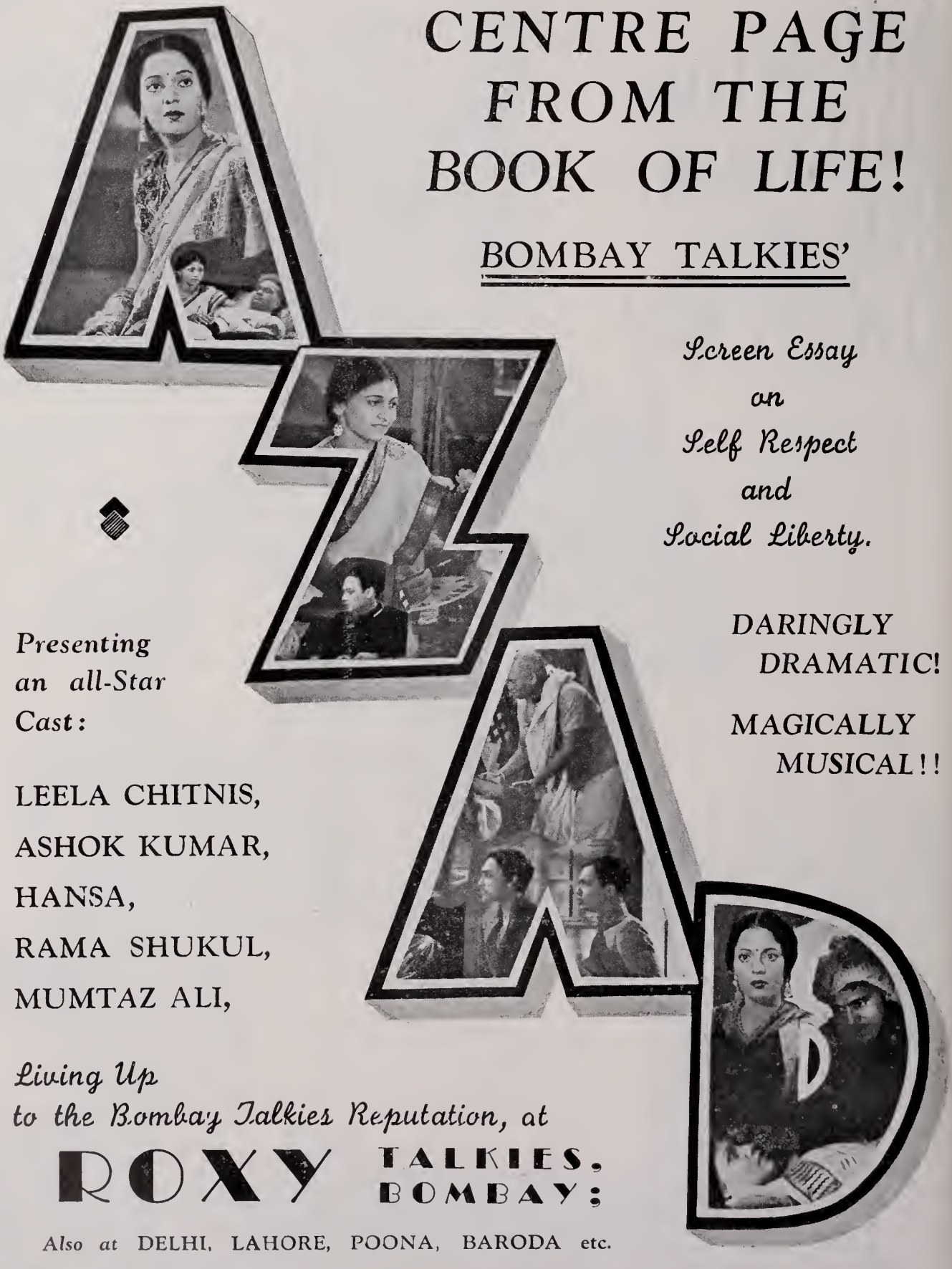

Screen Essay on Self Respect and Social Liberty.

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Mr. N. G. Jog

Fans are Fools, Idiots and Boors, But-

From Salome To Pavlova—They All Lived On Human Hearts

"Once I Loved Marlene Dietrich's Legs—Now I Hate Her Buttonless Trousers"

●

By: N. G. JOG

A woman is only a woman but a good cigar is a smoke. And what would be a star without a fan? Not even a woman.

In the great industry of screen glamour the fan is at once the hero and the villain. For his enjoyment stars are born. To please him do the scouts scour the distant corners of the globe and discover raw material, which has to be shorn and plucked, groomed and grounded, before it can pass as a streamlined product on the silver screen, labelled as "IT" or "OOMPH" or some other scream.

And now the poor fan, who ultimately has to pay for all those protracted and costly processes by which the utterly commonplace goose is metamorphosed into the "Swan Celestial" is himself put into the dock by the critics. He is accused of want of manners or rather of having very offensive manners. He annoys the stars by his unwanted attentions; he pesters them with lust breathing fan-mail; and sometimes he even persecutes them in person with his amorous advances.

Fans, where are your manners? Fans, why do you hang around open-mouthed at studio doors? Fans, why do you carry those colossal bouquets to the premiers of the super-supers of your idols?

Fans, why are you fans?

But, ragging aside, what else can the poor fan do? He has to be true to his genus or lose his identity altogether. In the latter case it means making the world fanless. And as I observed at the outset; No fans, no stars!

THE VISION IN THE DARKNESS!

I do not desire to discuss here whether the cinema is mainly a means of popular enjoyment or whether we should have pictures with a purpose. I shall for the present content myself with the observation that the phenomenal progress of the silver screen was primarily due to its ability to serve as a perfect vehicle of emotional escapism for men and women and children and adults and for the poor as well as the rich.

To the writer Marlene's legs were once legendary but now—alas!

No sooner the lights go out and one's favourite hero or heroine or villain comes on the screen, one can surrender oneself entirely to the swift-moving tempo of the story. One can in fact leave one's mortal frame altogether (as the Yogis are reported to have been doing) and for a brief, hectic time live in the life of another. We can laugh and weep, flirt and love, win and lose, and do everything that in our humdrum life we have always day dreamed of doing. We can leap right through the Keatsian "charmed magic casements, opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn."

The sudden switching on of the lights and the strains of "God Save The King" bring us to our feet—and to our senses. But not quite! We are no doubt rudely awakened out of the etherealised existence but our memory still clings to the vestige of unreality. The flight of imagination beyond space and time might have been unreal but at any rate the stars in the screen firmament are very much real. They are alive, vital, human. Surely we can catch them by the hand. At any rate lay our hearts at their feet.

At that very moment a fan is born. He is an amorphous creature and therefore amoral. He is

being possessed, hypnotised and as long as he is in that condition, any talk of his manners is meaningless.

How many of us have some time or other thought of writing to Greta Garbo or Norma Shearer or Devika Rani! There is a wide field of selection and one can pick one's type and choice. That is the first stage of adoration and it is fortunate that most of us stop at that. Few muster the courage of actually writing the letter and imploring the inevitable autographed photo. Fewer still have the courage or the opportunity of meeting their idol in person. And those that survive this last stage of astral fever no longer remain fans. They become fiends. Footlight fiends!

MARLENE'S LEGS—ONCE AND NOW!

In my own salad days my particular fancy used to be Marlene Dietrich. I hailed her as the one and only star for me. A big portrait of hers adorned my study. I am quite sure that I would have then forgotten my manners (and probably my morals) had there been the least chance of meeting her face to face. As it was, my adoration was sort of sublimated. The famous Dietrich legs became for me a legend and a hot piece on "Legs and Legends" was consequently published in more than one Indian paper.

The article still has an honoured place in my file—it *was* rather nice—but I have long since ceased going into ecstasies over those legendary legs. To-day I consider Marlene Dietrich all that a woman ought not to be. Her fleshless face, her curveless figure, her buttonless trousers—all create a veritable revulsion in me and I cannot stand her picture from a mile.

I know I am being utterly unfair (not to say untrue) to a very clever and capable actress. But I am lifting the veil off my own fan past just to give the reader a glimpse into the psychology of the star-struck. Honestly I don't regret, much less repent, my experience. I consider myself all the better for the emotional purge through which I passed.

Even in the case of those who have made fools of themselves, I may say that it is better to forget one's manners and be kicked into sense by a cinema star than to forfeit one's calf-heart and be led first to the altar, and subsequently by the nose, by that girl who is casting sheep's eyes at you across the balcony. The devil, said La Dietrich, is a woman!

THE AGE AND MIND OF THE FAN

The fan is a symptomatic product of modern civilisation. We of the year of grace 1940 pride ourselves on being without any delusions or illusions. But verily the silver screen is the greatest illusion in history. The stars scintillate in their firmament and beckon us. Even the most fierce iconoclasts amongst us have had (in their teens) their own private idols before whom they burnt myrrh and incense of emotion. These illusions and idols are really essential for the emotional equilibrium of the young. Even if they cause some harm in a few cases, by and large they do a world of good.

The late teens and the early twenties are the years when we are struck by the fan fang. I have yet to meet a fan above thirty. It is the adolescent who is the most fanly of fans. Sexually just waking, emotionally in a welter, intellectually not matured, it is the mind and spirit of the boy or the girl in teens which is most susceptible to the footlight infection. I am quite prepared to admit that, here and there, the celluloid gods and goddesses may corrupt the manners (and sometimes even the morals) of the young generation. But they also certainly save it from emotional and spiritual frustration.

After all the fever is so short-lived, howsoever delirious it may prove during its run. A child is all

Leela Chitnis will be seen once again in "Bandhan" the new social picture under production at Bombay Talkies' Studios.

the more healthier for having gone through its measles and an adolescent, though, transitionally, he or she may behave like a prize ass, is all the better fitted for the serious business of life for having succumbed to the star craze.

PORT SAID OF EMOTIONS!

Emotional escapism, which is the essence of fan-dom, is all the more necessary in the life of the present generation of Indian youths, with feet fixed in the East, heads hanging on the West, and minds vacillating in between. The silver screen serves as a sort of blacked-out Port Said to them, the emotional meeting ground of the East and the West. They can let themselves go with wild abandon, forget all the taboos and restraints and touch-me-nots of the society in which their lot is cast and give the reins to all their pent-up longings and suppressed lust, complexes and inhibitions, without losing caste or their face either.

They can hitch their wagon to whatever star, starlet or planet they may be attracted by, pester her with impassioned letters, phone her at all hours of the day and night on the off-chance of being at least damned in her sweet voice, wall-paper their garrets with her pictures, gate-crash her flat or studio to get chucked out from her paradisical presence by the well-trained Durwan, or (if you are lucky enough) to be kicked out by her own dainty foot. *Her very own*—oh! what an exquisite destiny!

It is a brief paradise. A mad whirl! A most colourful life as long as it lasts. You are elated, enthralled. You walk on air, forgetting your feet on earth. A sense of reality soon dawns upon you. That inevitability is what makes the fan's auto-intoxication so very worth while. It serves as a prophylaxis of the soul and gives you immunity from further heart-attacks. In other words, it makes you hard-boiled.

OH! THAT GRAIN OF SALT!.

And what is the phoney talk of film stars being fed up with their admirers and worshippers, with those autograph-hunters and bouquet throwers, and with all the gaga boys and giggling girls? What is this high heresy of the poor dears only wanting to be allowed to do their work in peace and privacy?

I am quite prepared to believe the broadcasts of Herr Goebbels, or the outbursts of Signor Gayda, or even the Forward trumpet-blasts of our own Desh Gaurab Subhas Chandra Bose. I cannot, however, swallow this hocus of the star's abhorrence of his or her fans.

The fans may be fulsome flatterers, blundering idiots and insufferable bores and boors. But they are fans all the same; the air, water and sun so essential for the astral art to bloom, the human fuel on which alone their high strung personality can thrive.

No. The true artiste born to her art requires none of the intellectual appraisals and the long-winded appreciation of cold-blooded critics: she wants the warming fire of the human heart, the heart which lies at her feet and goes to her head, the heart which her fan alone can hand her on a salver, to be squeezed or spurned as she pleases. In this way alone can her soul flower: from Salome to Pavlova they will tell you the same tale. Sometimes in a mood of inconsistency my lady may protest loudly, but that is only another manner of saying "Thank you!" to her fans.

DON'T BLAME THE FANS!

Moralising is the easiest and cheapest of social approaches. The fan is misbehaved, detestable miscreant. No doubt very easily said! But in these times when every criminal expects to be rationally understood and cured, who will pity the poor fan, who will save him from utter spiritual and moral breakdown? It is he, more than his alleged victims who are so firmly entrenched behind their astronomical pay-rolls, who needs sympathy and succour.

You educate a youth under conditions in which he is convinced that his education is an apprenticeship to unemployment. You make marriage economically impossible till late in life, when it merely leads to emotional frustration. You shatter his nerves in a world where human values are observed only in their breach. You inflame his passions by organised sextravaganza on the screen. And when he falls a victim to this terrific social onslaught on his morale, you accuse him of misbehaviour! Fans, where are your manners?.....

As well might have Menaka, the celestial star, after the epic episode that led to the birth of Shakuntala, asked Vishwamitra, the great Rishi, "O Sage, where are your morals?"

LEELA CHITNIS and RAMA SHUKAL in "Azad" a Bombay Talkies' picture.

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I DEAL IN WIVES good — handsome and Educated.....

Virgins—Widows and Neighbour's wives.....

On long term or short term contract.....

BECAUSE I AM A BROKER OF MATRIMONY

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JACK WARNER

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Warner's - The Studio With A Social Conscience

An Example Indian Producers Should Emulate

HARRY WARNER

Warner Brothers and their allied concerns—Vitaphone, First National, Cosmopolitan—have many memorable screen achievements to their credit. One of the earliest motion picture pioneers in America, the Brothers Warner were the first to introduce sound films, the first to produce a 'musical' and the first to produce a colour film. For their initiative and enterprise no doubt they have been amply rewarded.

Today they own and control the premier production and distribution concern in Hollywood, a chain of 400 theatres all over U.S.A., dozens of leading musical publishing firms and many other allied organizations. They are millionaires—or, perhaps, billionaires.

THEY ARE DIFFERENT

To us, however, what is important is not the commercial success of Warners, not how much they have made out of the show business, but what they have given to us through their pictures —the ideas and the ideals that they have propagated on the screen. And it is because we feel that among American producers, the Warner Brothers alone have a consistent record of producing the largest number of socially significant and progressive pictures that we in India have learnt to honour and respect their name.

PAUL MUNI

That is why we hold up the example of Warner Brothers and their pictures for the inspiration and guidance of our Indian producers.

According to a writer, "Warner's is the only major studio that seems to know or cares to know what is going on in America besides sex dalliance, pearl-handled gunplay, and the giving of top coats to comedy butlers." In other words, it is the only studio acquainted with the life of the common people realistically and in the words of Upton Sinclair, "the only Democrats among the motion picture magnates."

THE PROOF

Take a look at these titles picked at random from several hundred Warner pictures released during the last seven years—"I Am A Fugitive From The Chain Gang", "Bordertown", "They Won't Forget", "The Life of Louis Pasteur", "The Life of Emile Zola", "A Child is Born", "Crime School", "Angels With Dirty Faces", "Marked Woman", "White Angel", "Dust Be My Destiny", "Each Dawn I Die", "Confessions of a Nazi Spy", "Juarez", "Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet" and "We Are Not Alone." You would immediately see that there is a streak of social consciousness running through all these pictures.

In each of them there is a plea, obvious or subtle, for social justice, for better human relationships, for decent moral standards, for peace and the brotherhood of man. It can't be an accident. There must be a design in this crowd of purposeful themes, a reason why Warner Brothers studios specialize in controversial and progressive pictures instead of producing charming but meaningless boy-meets-girl romantic melodramas.

E. G. ROBINSON

FATHER WARNER WAS A COBBLER

To my mind, the reason lies in the fact that the Brothers came from the common people. Their father was a cobbler, and they have forgotten neither their origin nor the hardships they had to endure on their way up, the battles they had to fight with usurers and monopoly capitalists.

And they have not forgotten the simple code of decency that their poor and honest parents taught them in their childhood. It is the same code that now governs their selection of themes for motion pictures. *"The motion picture", says Harry Warner, "present right and wrong. By showing both right and wrong we teach the right."*

GEORGE RAFT

THEMES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

Take any of the above-mentioned pictures—and they are only a few out of many—and you find this ideal of Harry Warner illustrated. Among them you will find certain trends and cycles which profitably may be analysed and studied—even though only a brief mention can be made here.

The most outstanding contribution of the Warner Brothers is the series of screen biographies that they have presented. Biographies with a difference and with a purpose. Not spectacular biographies of kings and conquerors but of humanitarians, of fighters for social justice, of liberators and idealists. Pasteur, Florence Nightingale ("The

JAMES CAGNEY

White Angel"). Emile Zola. Juarez. Dr. Erhlich. (It is to be noticed that no narrow national considerations rule the selection of these biographies. Pasteur and Zola were French, Florence Nightingale an Englishwoman, Erhlich a German!).

We cannot imagine any other producer coming forward to produce pictures about such people, to revive the message that these great souls left for humanity. For the first time the screen that hitherto had been used exclusively to glorify sex or to revive the questionable glories of decadent empires was harnessed for a loftier purpose. Pictures like Pasteur and Zola are the most irrefutable answer to those (like Mahatma Gandhi) who continue to think of the cinema as an evil.

In this connection it is amusing to relate here that a prominent Hollywood producer when told of the project to film the life of Louis Pasteur, exclaimed, "Oh, that milk man!" (thinking of 'Pasteurized Milk, no doubt). Which just proves how necessary it is to educate the public—including many producers—by means of such pictures!

BETTE DAVIES

OUR AWARD WINNER

Shantaram Thanks Journalists

In his letter to the Film Journalists' Association of India accepting the Bronze Medal for the best picture of the year given to "Admi" a Prabhat social picture, Mr. V. Shantaram writes:

"While thanking you for your esteemed token in appreciation of our humble efforts, we may mention that you have saddled us with a greater responsibility of producing still better and progressive pictures which will be the aim and object of our future endeavours".

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Then there are the "socials" among Warner pictures—dealing with live social problems of America. In this category fall "Crime School", "Angels With Dirty Faces", "Angels Wash Their Faces", all of which deal with the lives of slum children.

"Marked Woman" and "Girls on Probation", are sympathetic slants on the 'fallen' women; while pictures like "Dark Victory" and "We Are Not Alone" present subjects of deeper study of human psychology. Even the crime pictures are given a purposeful twist and made into pleas for justice and fair play for the under-dogs—e.g. "I Am A Fugitive From The Chain Gang", "Each Dawn I Die", "Dust Be My Destiny" "They Made Me A Criminal" etc.

PRISCILLA LANE

News-value has been another remarkable feature of Warner pic-

The eternal parade to earn a living. Scenes of classic rural beauty make "Woman" an album of village life.

tures—ever since during the last Great War they produced "My Four Years In Germany," based on the sensational book by James G. Gerard, U.S.A., Ambassador to Germany. The picture was pieced together from old news-reels and was the fore-runner of the modern documentary and semi-documentary films. It is interesting to find the same Warner Brothers, after twenty years, producing "Confessions of A Nazi Spy", based on another sensational book and produced on practically the same principle.

NOT MERELY FOR ENTERTAINMENT

It is not to be believed, however, that Warner Brothers only produce films with sociological content. They give over a hundred films every year including musicals, adventure dramas, crime thrillers, sentimental family melodramas, etc—to mention a few only, "Robin Hood", "Dodge City", "Four Daughters", etc.—but one can say with confidence that even in these purely entertainment films you will find a spark of humanity, an emphasis on decent living and human dignity.

ANN SHERIDAN

Mrs. Himansu Rai (Devika Rani) wishes to express her deep gratitude for the kind thoughts and messages of sympathy which she has received from the Indian Film Industry, the Press and friends all over India at the death of her husband Mr. Himansu Rai.

She is unable to answer personally the overwhelming number of messages which have been a source of great comfort to her in her grief.

It is typical of Warner Brothers that recently they have produced a series of patriotic short films depicting glorious chapters from American history (Why is it that few of these are seen in India?). These films, I believe, are available to societies and groups for free exhibition. How many Indian producers—or, for that matter, American producers have this measure of patriotism and imagination?

THEIR FUTURE PROMISE

MIRIAM HOPKINS

And, while thanking them for what they have done already, we look forward to more and better pictures from Warner Brothers a few of which already have been announced.

These include "Virginia City", starring Errol Flynn, an ambitious picture of the wide open spaces with a human appeal angle to it; "Castle On Hudson", said to be the greatest prison drama ever made; "On Dress Parade" featuring the Dead End kids in another picture about slum children; Edward G. Robinson in "Mr. Orchid", Bette Davis and Charles Boyer in "All This And Heaven Too" and the great Paul Muni himself in—either the life of Beethoven or in another Doctor story.

Whatever the picture, if it carries the Warner name one can be sure it is more than mere entertainment—it has in addition a social purpose!

HANSA, RAMA SHUKAL and MUMTAZ seem to have an argument in "Azad", which is at the Roxy Cinema in Bombay.

SATYARANI—In "Madari Mohan" a mythological spectacle of surpassing beauty, this new charmer makes a debut. The picture which is produced by Nootan Pictures will soon come to the screen.

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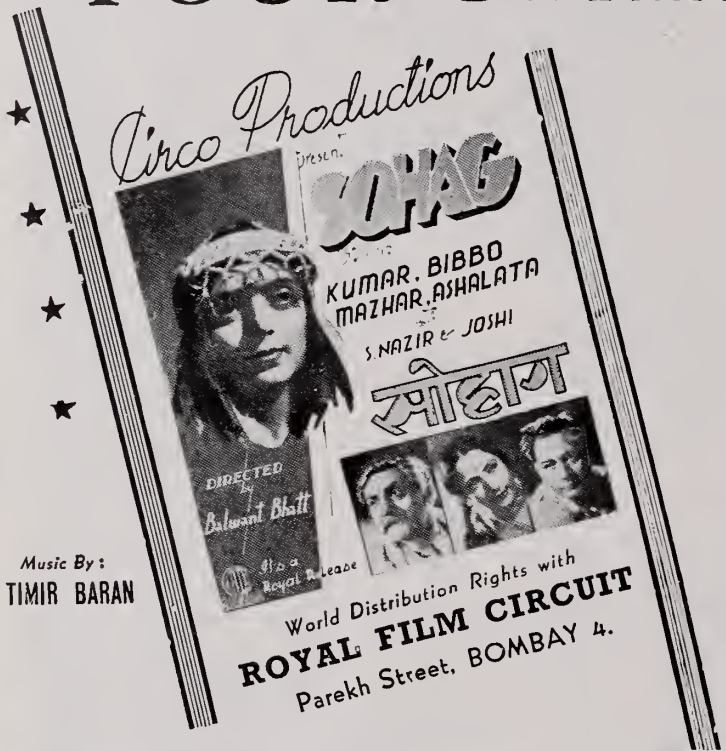

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Our Review

Creator of 'Tulsidas' Makes "India To-day"

Prithviraj Gives A Brilliant Performance

Interesting Story Sustains Audience Interest

This picture of Director Jayant Desai has come to the screen ten months after "Sant Tulsidas", his previous picture, which proved a tremendous box-office success..

"India Today" is a social story in which an attempt has been made to incorporate too many things—to be exact "punches" for the box-office. The picture has therefore become slightly mixed up at places with a number of oft seen and familiar situations.

Several situations call into play the imagination of the audience to make up for the jumping logic in the continuity. The numerous incidents pieced together in a familiar strain also demand patience from the spectators.

VILLAGE VS. TOWN

Dhiraj and Umang belong to the village. So do Shashi and Urmi. The main drama moves between these two families with Unmad an interloper thrown in for grace. Evidently, the families are well off in worldly goods, for we find Umang returning to the scene of the drama as an educated man from Calcutta. On the other hand Urmi goes one better and returns with some overseas training.

Strangely enough, the other brother Dhiraj and the other sister Shashi remain in the village and become simple rustics.

The dramatic contrast being thus made ready, Shashi and Dhiraj are in love with each other till Umang comes on the scene. The scene where Umang appears has been given a national colour by making Shashi a Khadi seller. Shashi is soon attracted by the glamorous Umang. Dhiraj is surprised, shocked but ultimately submits. He goes out of the village with a characteristic prodigal son gesture and allows Umang to marry Shashi, but not without threatening that he would break Umang's head if Shashi was ever made unhappy.

MISS "INTRIGUE" ENTERS

Urmi, the complication in reserve, now turns up and provides intrigue and entertainment with a wild abandon that makes the drama interesting. She begins work by seducing Umang.

A crisis is soon reached and Umang mortgaging his ancestral property to Unmad elopes with Urmi to the city leaving his wife and family. Unmad soon throws the family into the streets, while Umang is throwing money into the streets in the city.

INDIA TO-DAY

Producers:	*Ranjit Movietone*
Story:	*Gunvantrai Acharya*
Dialogues & Songs	*D. N. Madhok*
Direction:	*Jayant Desai*
Cinematography:	*G. G. Gogte*
Audiography:	*C. K. Trivedi*
Music:	*Khemchand Prakash*
Cast:	*Prithviraj, Ishwarlal, Charlie, Rose, Sitara, Etc.*
Released At:	*Royal Opera House, Bombay.*
Date of Release:	*27th April, 1940.*

Grim tragedy, which waited so long, is now released. Dhiraj is now in charge of the family—the father having died of shock. He tries to maintain his mother and the pregnant wife of his brother. Somehow the child is born. To get it milk he robs Unmad and is arrested and sent to jail. Umang has also by now spent all his money and rather too suddenly turns over a new leaf only to throw Urmi into an accidental death.

A fugitive from law, he disguises himself and becomes "Emile Zola" by writing books under the name of Kaviraj.

There is a dramatic meeting between the two brothers—in fact a complete family gathering. Parts of these sequences are very pathetic and are worth seeing.

PRITHVI TAKES THE VOTE

Prithviraj has given a brilliant performance as Dhiraj. His work in this picture is in sharp contrast with his performance in his previous picture. In the last four reels of this picture, Prithvi gives a heart-rending portrayal of a man of ideals badly kicked about and disillusioned. Ishwarlal is as usual consistent and loyal in his portrayal of Umang. Charlie's slapstick does not fit in well with the serious design of the drama. At a couple of places Rose has also done good work.

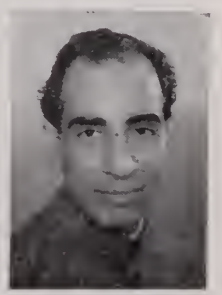
The songs and dialogues are poor.

The picture however, is very well taken by the director. Had he attended to its logical development, "India Today" would have become a very popular social theme. Photography is surprisingly soothing, the sound, however, is not so happy.

In places, there is of course plenty of entertainment and the picture is likely to appeal to people who are not very anxious to find the why's and wherefore's of things.

The names of the characters: Dhiraj, Umang, Urmi, Shashi and even Unmad are very cleverly given but their symbolic significance, while being appropriate, is likely to go over the heads of ordinary folks.

Mr. Jayantilal Thakore of Famous Pictures, Bangalore and Mr. Jashbhai Patel of General Films of Madras, received serious injuries when the premises of General Films caught fire on the 26th May 1940. Both of them were removed to the hospital where they are progressing steadily.



Mr. Jayantilal Thakore

The Only Three Great Directors of India!

BARUA

His vision of life is death.

SHANTARAM

To him life is a reality.

NITIN BOSE

He frames life like a picture.

Said Barua: "I would like to build another Taj Mahal a beautifully sad monument to love."

Said Shantaram: "What is the use of wasting a million tons of marble over the grave of a single woman? I would like to build a row of workers' flats—airy, well-lighted, hygienic—I would like to build a hospital, a school, a gymnasium for children."

Said Nitin Bose: "Decide what you want and I will build it for you —the Taj Mahal, a hospital or even a peasant's mud hut! I can promise only one thing. I will build it well. But I will build it my own way."

* * *

Wherever and whenever Indian film directors are discussed invariably these three names will be mentioned—Barua, Shantaram, Nitin Bose. Not only are they undoubtedly the three *best* directors in this country but, according to some, they are the *only* three Indian directors worth the name. In any case, with the exception of these three, no other Indian director seems to possess a style of his own, an appreciation of the vast potentialities of his art-medium, an adequate aesthetic sense or even sufficient technical knowledge to be able to interpret story situations in cinematic terms with effectiveness and significance.

Here we must make a clear distinction between directors and script-readers. Any one with average intelligence can direct a film and, with luck, make it a moderate success. The worst of them write their own scenarios or, more frequently, don't know what a scenario is and make a hotch-potch of the whole thing while the best of them can never go beyond the limits of the scenario supplied to them.

BY:
K. AHMED ABBAS

A real director, however, is a creative artist and gives his picture at every stage the impress of his own personality. In the case of such a director, an experienced critic or even an intelligent cine-goer ought to be able to find his name by just carefully observing the picture without the necessity of looking at the credit titles. Even in Hollywood such creative directors are not many though the names of William Dieterle, Frank Capra, Ernst Lubitsch, Mervyn Le Roy, Cecil B. De Mille, Alfred Hitchcock, immediately occur to one's mind. In India we have our trio—Nitin Bose, P. C. Barua, and V. Shantaram. It will be profitable and instructive to analyse and study their relative merits and their individual styles of directing.

Yes. These directors have as sharply distinguished individual styles of direction as Shakespeare and Dickens, or Chesterton and Bernard Shaw have their individual styles of writing!

WHO? WHERE? WHY?

Let us begin with Barua, for he impressed his individuality on his very first picture—"*Devdas*". Remember the first shot of that beautifully gloomy masterpiece. I have not yet forgotten it. It was sufficient to tell you immediately that here was a director with imagination and aesthetic taste. But, after seeing all the Barua pictures that followed, now I think there was more to that scene than caught my eye at that time. Do you remember it? Out of the very lens of the camera walked away the slender figure of a woman, going further and further, her back turned to the audience, a *puja thali* in her hand. A beautiful figure—and mysterious.

The audience kept guessing; who is she and why? And where is she going? And I can imagine Barua reclining back in his director's chair and remarking with a cynical smile, "Who? Where? And why? But I don't know myself."

Since then I have come to believe that according to Barua, beauty and mystery are the only two keynotes of life. All the characters in all his pictures seem to walk out of the camera, unidentified, and walk away no one knows where or why. I don't mean it in any sense as disparagement but rather to indicate that Barua's attitude to life resembles the philosophic fatalism of Omar Khayyam:

Into this Universe, and 'why' not knowing,
Nor, 'whence', like water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not 'whither', willy-nilly blowing.

WHY 'DEVDAS' WAS A HIT

From 'Devdas' to 'Zindagi' you find the peculiar Baruasque touch in every picture of his. Intellectual individualism cannot be understood or appreciated by the mass of the people. 'Devdas' was a solitary 'hit' because the theme was simple—the frustration of a disappointed lover—and Barua's harrowing tragedy went straight to the heart. He piled pathos upon pathos, took advantage of Saigal's voice to provoke our tears with mournful music, mortified us with the vision of Devdas coughing out blood as his train thundered along to nowhere and, in the final scene, even showed a funeral pyre to symbolize the ultimate futility of life and struggle. In a country full of frustrated lovers, all seeking consolation in a poetry of pessimism, 'Devdas' was a sure fire hit. His latter films which sought to picturise subtler—though equally pessimistic and fatalistic—themes did not draw so well at the box-office but they were always popular with the intellectuals (not necessarily the progressives) because they are a reflection of their own minds, sentimental, pessimistic, confused, and constantly groping towards reality.

Escapism—the urge to run away from the unpalatable realities of life—has characterized all Barua pictures. Devdas tried to run away from himself by wandering all over India, the artist in "Mukti" sought peace, *a la* Gauguin, by taking refuge in the jungle, Shreemati of "Zindagi" forsook her home for the colony of a Santhal tribe. This physical escape, however, is only symbolic of the more important mental 'running away' from realities.

The realities from which not only Barua's characters and Barua himself but also most sensitive intellectuals in India are trying to run away are—economic realities. They are trying to delude themselves into the belief that what matters in life are sentiments and emotions and not rupees, annas and pies. Analyse any Barua picture from the material view-point and their pathetic self-complacency becomes self-evident.

Could Devdas and Parvati be denied marital happiness if they were economically independent? Could Devdas nurse his tragedy by singing and travelling all over India in first class if economic circumstances had forced him to work hard for his living? Was not the inequitable distribution of wealth the real problem of "Adhikar"? Suppose the artist of "Mukti" was, like 90% artists in India, painting advertisement posters for a living, could he still go riding on an elephant to seek salvation?

IN HIS OWN IMAGE?

Barua is an aristocrat and, therefore, economic difficulties do not exist for him. He moulds his characters in his own image and they, too, are free from any such worries, their only problems being emotional. Invariably they seek to drown their frustrations in orgies of charitable activities—feeding the Brahmins, building hospitals and schools. One should like to see how Barua would handle similar situations in the case of poor, working-class men. In "Adhikar," he avoided the economic issue by emphasizing the alleged superiority of aristocratic breeding. And in "Zindagi", Ratan was jobless, apparently, by his own choice. He was really an aristocrat, a lazy philosophical anarchist, and his contempt for money was thoroughly unproletarian.

PADMA DEVI in "Hindusthan Hamara" a Daryani production directed by Ram Daryani.

EYE ON DEATH!

But more than anything else, I repeat that Barua (like Thomas Hardy) is a pessimist, a fatailst. Not struggle but docile acceptance of defeat is the characteristic of all his heroes and heroines. By the way, have you noticed, how many of his pictures end in the death of the principal character? A well-known Gujerati critic aptly put it when he wrote: "Shantaram's eye is on life, Barua's on Death."

CAMERA WIZARD

Nitin Bose is essentially a cameraman and his interest in a photoplay is primarily pictorial. He also possesses a strong sense of drama and can construct a vigorous scenario out of the slenderest material. Give him a story and, I am sure, he will not pause to think of its ideological considerations; he will not be worried if it is saturated with fatalism or full of gay optimism, whether it is spun round the life of a singer or a tuberculosis patient. He will put it to one test only: Can it be given sufficient pictorial interest? The only other consideration that would weigh with him is whether the story has a strong romantic element in it.

Have you ever noticed that he hardly ever touches a classic or a well-known novel. Mostly he takes up an idea and the detailed script is written by him or directly under his supervision. That is because he does not wish to be hampered by the plot limitations of a story that is already well-known. If he took up a novel, the author would not recognize it on the screen. To Nitin the ideas of the author or the plot situations of a story are of no value unless they can be effectively expressed in photographic terms.

Judged purely on their story value, most Nitin Bose pictures have been based on slender material. The only exception was "Dhoop Chhaon," a story rich in dramatic content, and what a grand picture Nitin made out of it! The basis of "President" (as exemplified by the American-sounding title itself) was so unreal and of "Dushman" so artificial that in the hands of another director they would have become simply terrible. But so well does Nitin construct his scenario, weaving situations in such a closely-knit pattern, and photographing them to such good effect that you never pause to think whether they are real or unreal.

CRAZY ANGLES CREATE SUSPENSE

Remember the opening scene of "President"? A meeting of the Board of Directors of a mill, presided over by a woman! (Even in America there is hardly a single woman President of an industrial corporation.) A patently foreign and unreal idea. And yet the wizardry of the camera makes it look real—or at least makes you oblivious to its unreal nature. You see a clock and hear some voices. Some one is expected to arrive exactly at 9-30. The minute hand makes a complete circle, the clock chimes the half-hour. "Gentlemen, the President"! The camera, hitherto focussed on the clock, is swung to the door which opens and a woman enters. Try to shoot this scene in any other way and its lack of realism would be exposed. It would appear dull and prosaic. But Nitin Bose, by the magic of his camera, makes it intensely dramatic.

SARDAR AKHTAR in "Woman" a National Studios' picture.

Whenever I go to see a Nitin Bose picture I am all the time watching the camera work, marvelling at the dexterity with which he lends authenticity and psychological significance to situations by camera angles, subtle shades of lighting, quick montage effects. Recall how in "President" he created terrific suspense in the climax by giving crazy angles of the empty rooms in quick succession, (Barua copied the same thing in "Zindagi"!), how well he used bleached landscape to heighten the tempo of the motor car chase in "Dhoop Chhaon" (but since then he has been doing the same thing much too often!) and how in "Dushman" he created sheer poetry in an otherwise ordinary scene by giving a misty effect to the lake-side where Saigal and Leela Desai meet to part.

TAUGHT US HOW TO MAKE LOVE!

It may also be mentioned that practically all the romantic situations in most Indian films, the lover's hide-and-seek in duets, the humorous interludes and clever banter, owe their origin to Nitin Bose. Of course, such situations are unreal. They don't—or at least a few years ago, didn't-happen in actual life. But very soon they will be real. Art will teach life. Indeed, Nitin may be given the credit for having taught modern young India how to make love—not in the weepy, frustrated fashion of the Barua pictures but in a healthier, more romantic, good humoured and less platonic manner.

Beyond romance and dramatic effects, Nitin Bose's genius has not yet gone. Even "Dharti Mata" lost its potential power as it was over-romanticized. He has been doing his best by dressing up the skeletons of inconsequential romances in the fineries of his clever scenarios

and magical camera work. He will produce a great picture when he decides to take up a really good theme and not only photographs it well but also gives it a point and purpose by correct psychological and realistic treatment.

GIVE US MORE PICTURES, SHANTARAM

The worst thing about Shantaram, as a director, is that he does not produce pictures frequently enough. It seems a little unfair, therefore, to compare his pictures, into which goes so much thought and careful leisurely work with the pictures of other directors who have to work to a schedule and give a picture within a specified length of time. A director who also happens to be the chief executive of his studio has certain advantages that other directors may well envy. But at the same time it need not be forgotten that the dual responsibility means double work and while other directors have nothing else to worry about except their own pictures. Shantaram must devote thought and energy to a dozen other departments of the studio. Which, as you can readily see, strikes off any advantages he may have and puts him on practically the same level as the others.

Like Barua, Shantaram believes in making his pictures the vehicle of his own ideas. (Indeed to him a picture is not a vehicle of ideas but of ideals and it is impossible to imagine Shantaram directing a picture without any definite social purpose.) Like Nitin Bose he is a master of technique and a good cameraman himself. We may, therefore, compare the content of his films with Barua and his technique with Nitin Bose.

"ZINDAGI" AND "LIFE...."

Luckily the latest pictures of Barua and Shantaram have somewhat similar titles. While Barua is content just to label his picture, "Zindagi", Shantaram makes a bold assertion: "Life is For Living". Where Barua is vague, Shantaram is definite; where Barua seeks to portray life as *he* sees it, Shantaram goes further and also shows how it should be lived. The characters in "Zindagi" (as in all Barua pictures since "Devdas") seem to have walked out of the camera, Shantaram's characters are rooted in the earth. They are creatures of flesh and blood, with all the responsibilities, loyalties, complexes, weaknesses and virtues that the common man is heir to. Compare Ratan with Moti, Shreemati with Kesar. Any policeman you see on the street corner may be Moti, but it will be difficult to find a Ratan among the million unemployed youths in the country The one is a creature of Art, the other a living human being.

EXPENSIVE FRUSTRATION

Barua is a pessimist and a fatalist. So are his characters. Shantaram struggled in his own life—and succeeded. His characters, too, struggle for their share of life and ultimate happiness. Sometimes they fail in their efforts but they don't leave the world for the wilderness, run up and down the country in first class carriages or take to 'the daughter of the grape!' They don't, because, being ordinary men and women, they can't afford these luxuries of frustration. Shantaram does not glamourize death, he glorifies life. "Zindagi" ends in the death of Shreemati, "Life is For Living" with the marching feet of Moti.

Unlike Barua, Shantaram is fully conscious of the economic realities of life. To him the life of the poor is not something only seen on studio 'sets', it is his own life. He knows how they live and how they love, how they dress and how they eat. What is most important, he knows how they *feel*. That is why you never find in his pictures the

La la, what a fellow to mess up things that way in "Lapandav" Meenaxi doesn't approve of the pursuits of Winayak.

patronizing attitude which manifests itself in long speeches on poverty delivered by well-fed stars in glamorous clothes! In atmosphere, dress and general appearance as well as in sentiment, he depicts the life of the average Indian in a realistic manner.

SYMBOLISM PLUS REALISM

Even scenes of exquisite symbolism are invested by Shantaram with realism and the economic background is not lost sight of at any time. "Zindagi" ends with a candle by the bed-side of Jamuna being blown out by a gust of wind. A beautiful and touching symbolism. In "Life Is For Living", Shantaram has already used the symbolism of the candle. While Kesar is waiting for Moti in her room, a gradually diminishing stub of candle symbolizes her waning hopes. Alongside the candle lies a pile of coins which, too, becomes smaller with the candle so that there are only three coins left as the little flame breathes its last. In the background of this shot we see, successively, first a tiffin carrier, then a paper packet of '*chivda*' and, finally, a '*lutya*' of water to symbolize the growing financial stringency of Kesar. Thus the emotional crisis is explained in terms of economic want and a personal tragedy assumes the larger significance of a social problem—the economic dependence of women. Similarly in both the pictures there are scenes laid in a poor locality restaurant. In "Zindagi"", it is used to 'put over' that joke about the counterfeit two-anna coin while Shantaram uses it to expose the exploitation of the hotel boys.

Between Nitin Bose and Shantaram it is difficult to say who uses the camera with greater skill. Both of them are masters of their craft, carefully using each shot to build the desired effect like an expert mason putting brick upon brick. Compare Nitin Bose's crazy-angle montage in "President" with the montage in "Life Is For Living" to depict Kesar's feeling that she was out-of-place in such a pious and godly household. Both are examples of clever camera work and effective cutting.

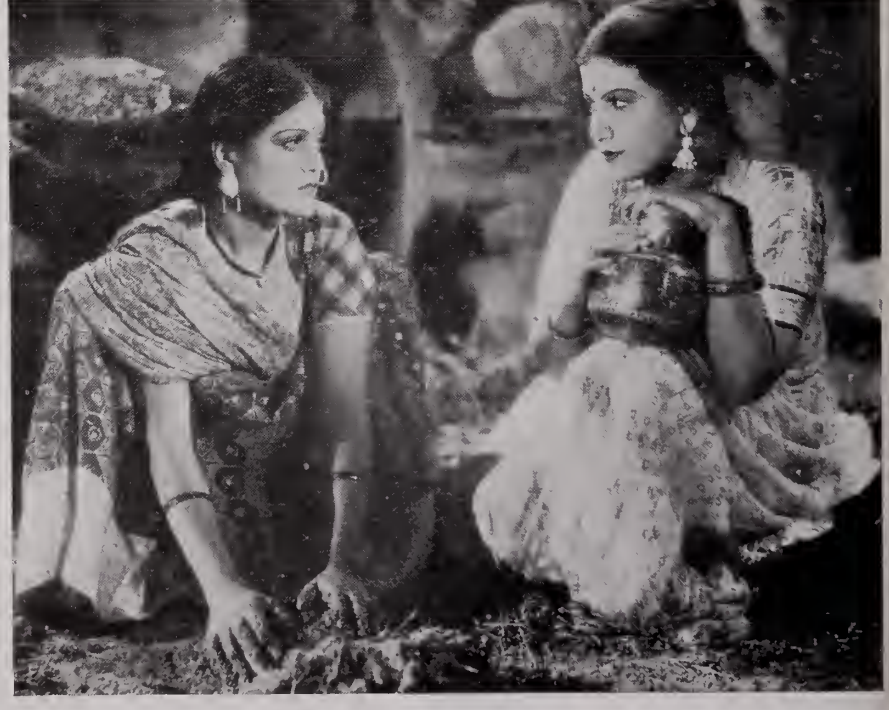
THAT "UNEXPECTED" CLOCK

In two respects, however, Shantaram's technique differs from Nitin Bose's. While Nitin uses a shot or series of shots with the sole purpose of heightening the effect of a certain sequence, Shantaram would not bring in anything unless it could be worked into the very pattern of the story. Contrast the clock in "Unexpected" and the "President". In the latter it is used to give a unity to the opening and the closing sequences, while in Shantaram's picture it becomes a character by itself—a portentious reminder of his age to the old bridegroom. Not for a moment are you allowed to forget the presence of the clock and its tick-tick-tick has a more ominous ring than the threats of a villain.

The more important difference, however, is that while Nitin Bose would bring in extraneous, artificial scenes like motor car chases or amateur theatricals to build a climax or lend a fast tempo, Shantaram achieves the same results by such simple, homely devices as a flowing river, broken chappals, a child teasing her uncle, a mother performing *puja,* a police band or a row of Diwali lights. Did you notice how he used brief cuts of the fast flowing river to create terrific suspense and to indicate Moti's intention to commit suicide and then depicted his calming down by reversing the shots as well as the sound.

By the way, those who think Indian directors can never give anything better than foreigners will be interested to learn that Shantaram's scene in "Unexpected" where the old man shatters the mirror and finds a mocking reflection of his in each broken piece has been used after 3 years in a first rate Hollywood film, "Elizabeth And Essex".

This seems to be the proper note of optimism on which to close this article. My purpose has not been to make insidious comparisons but to analyse the work of our three leading directors. We need them all—Barua for his poetic imagination, Nitin Bose for his technical competence, Shantaram for his idealism and realism. Each of them has given us good pictures and now we demand that among them, they give us at least three—more good directors.



Beautiful village scenes make "Woman" a distinctive picture. Sardar Akhtar and Vatsala Kumptekar checking up notes of their respective homes.

For Our Technicians

Give Us A Film Institute

A Plea For Better Organisation

●

BY THE EDITOR

Bulletin of the Association of Cine Technicians of India

There has been a fair unanimity of opinion on the part of both people in and out of the Industry, that whereas we have been otherwise stagnant, the only appreciable strides made by us during the last twenty-six years in the Indian Motion Picture Industry, have been of a purely technical character. While Paramounts, for instance, still make the same type of thrillers they specialised in four years ago, and New Theatres still believe in the same sob stuff that earned them a reputation during the good old "Puran Bhakt" days, it is the sound and photography of both these concerns that show the greatest measure of improvement.

We have now adopted a more scientific approach to both these arts, with the result that we can now predict with a greater degree of accuracy the ultimate results we are going to achieve. It does not usually require a hurried rush print these days to satisfy the director or the star that a particular close up has come out to satisfaction or that a particular song has been recorded satisfactorily.

A POOR PROGRESS

But we cannot get away with the fact that some doubt still remains, a very small amount of doubt it is true, but enough to set us thinking that all is not well. And when we actually sit down to analyse we find that a great deal is wrong—that we have really not made the progress that we should have made in twenty-six years that even this little progress has been by no means regular and that still there is no creative endeavour in our efforts as it should be.

Art to-day is but the science of to-morrow and science is after all but a form of systematised study, and there can be no hit and miss methods about it. And when we consider that our work is both art and science we must realise how important to us an initial systematic training must be. Most of our early technicians took to the profession with little or no education behind them and that they succeeded in achieving the results they did, is indeed a tribute to their skill and patience. But gradually as the industry began to standardise and the demand for more consistent results grew, there set in a gradual elimination of these early pioneers till to-day, except for a few, none of these old timers are with us.

AND THE STARS CAME

Lured by the high salaries paid to their early technicians, came a lot of movie struck aspirants to technical fame and it must be said to the credit of these men that they did achieve some measure of success. But these too had little or no education. Meanwhile the talkies had come and with it increased costs of production. Fortunately or unfortunately along with talkies, America sent us its star system as well, and at once our producers, as uneducated as the technicians, if not more, jumped at this apparently certain way to success.

The prices of stars went up and there came a fall in the technician's market. With the result that even that meagre level of education in our ranks fell once more to the pre-talkie days. Another contributing factor to this general fall was also the very low standard of education possessed by new apprentices at this stage, who found an entry into the profession because of family relations with the proprietor or an influential manager.

FILM INSTITUTE NECESSARY

Whatever the cause, when we pause to take an inventory to-day, we are forced to admit that we are scarcely fitted for the great technical strides that the industry must make in the next few years, or its very existence will be threatened. The industry will make this struggle

KISHORE SAHU and ROSE in "Bahurani," India Artists' picture.

but it will be the lot of unprepared technicians to face the calamity of being thrown out of employment and to see their places being taken up by more and more trained men from abroad.

A necessity therefore of some sort of Film Training Institute does exist—an institution that must have an official standing to be of any practical value.

It must train our future Directors of Sound and Photography and their crews. It must give certificates of efficiency to existing workers in the field, it must test the different types of chemicals and other raw materials which we use, and it must try to solve the hundred and one problems that arise during production which may be slightly beyond the capacity of the studio's average worker.

There are on the market to-day (owing partly to the international situation) a very large number of chemicals manufactured by dubious concerns and they are being indiscriminately used by our studios, because they are available, at a slightly larger rate of discount than possibly another make. If a control by some official body did exist, it is obvious such a position could never arise and a possible source of deterioration of our screen quality would have been avoided. The same can be said even of defective raw stock. The writer knows of several cases when the result of shootings ranging over several days has had to be scrapped because of faulty film stock.

INSTITUTION WITH SANCTION AND STATUS

But to wield the necessary influence such an institution must have the strength of definite sanctions behind it, supported by such powerful organisations as the Producers' and the Technicians' Associations.

The producers must first agree that they will not engage or otherwise employ any person who does not hold the diploma of the Institute and that they will not purchase any material for their use unless it bears the seal of the Institute. Existing employees must also be given time to prepare themselves for the Institute's examinations and to obtain its diploma without which they must be expressly told that they risk a dismissal.

The co-operation of the Technicians' Association, we are afraid, will merely have to be confined to an acceptance of these conditions of employment, and to a definite hand in the affairs of the Institute. We are sure that this will easily be available.

In our march forward towards progress we must not be influenced by any selfish personal considerations, but we must look forward to the good of the entire Industry and of our community in general. We can, therefore, rely upon this Association to give its whole-hearted co-operation to such a scheme, and in the meanwhile we shall await with eagerness any further suggestions on this matter from others who are interested.

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PICTURES IN MAKING

INDIA ARTISTS LTD.

By the time this is in print, "Bahurani" the maiden social production of this company is likely to be on the screen at the Excelsior Cinema in Bombay. The picture will resume its further run at another theatre in the city. The cast of this picture includes Kishore Sahu, Rose, Anuradha and Mubarak.

The next picture taken in hand is a comedy called "The Nest". It will go into shooting by the end of the month.

BOMBAY TALKIES LTD.

The sudden demise of Mr. Himansu Rai has necessitated a drastic revision of the production plans. "Narayani" featuring Devika Rani has been postponed for a while and another social picture "Bandhan" with Leela Chitnis and others has gone into shooting.

NATIONAL STUDIOS LTD.

"Woman", a beautiful epic of our village life is drawing huge crowds at the Pathe Cinema in Bombay and is likely to run there for a long time to come.

Another social picture "Sanskar" is lying ready for release.

The shooting of "Puja" a Kardar picture has stopped for the present because of an accident to Surendra, who is lying in the J. J. Hospital with a broken leg.

CIRCO PRODUCTIONS

After "Laxmi" completes its run at the Majestic, "Sohag" another social story will come to the screen.

"Geeta" and "Anuradha" are steadily progressing in the studios.

RANJIT MOVIETONE

"Pagal" a Kardar picture is now ready for release and will come to the screen sometime in July.

"Diwali" and "Musafir" two other social pictures are also ready.

"Umeed" is being shot regularly.

NOOTAN PICTURES

The producers expect their maiden production "Madari Mohan" to be a big hit of the season. It is a mythological story with plenty of mass appeal and with several popular songs and dances.

"Seva" and "Anath Patni" are two more social pictures scheduled for production this year.

"Seva" as its name indicates, glorifies the life story of a woman who devotes her career to the service of humanity in a selfless manner.

At the premiere of "Woman" in Pathe Cinema. Left to right: Mr. Mehboob, Mr. Mughni and Mr. Kardar.

"Anath Patni" is a heart rending tale of a woman whose vicious husband deserts her and leaves her to the tender mercies of a cruel world. It is pathetic in extreme.

MOHAN PICTURES

Hatimtai-ki-Beti" is well on way with the indoor shooting under the guidance of Mr. Nanubhai Vakil.

"Capt. Kishoree" is running well at the Super Talkies, Bombay.

K. Amarnath will shortly begin the shooting of another social story.

KISHORE SAHU
ARTISTE AND PRODUCER

A year back when Kishore told friends that he was going to produce a picture, people looked at him twice and nodded good-humouredly.

But now that "Bahurani" the first picture of India Artists Ltd. is due to be released at the Excelsior, Bombay, the laugh is on the friends.

Kishore has done something which is not easily done in these days of financial distress. He has not only produced a good social subject, but has also established a progressive producing company which promises to give us a better picture after every good one.

A graduate of Morris College, Nagpur, Kishore is reputed to be a good scholar of Urdu, Hindi and Persian. His short stories in Hindi have been widely read and appreciated.

An artist by instinct who often painted landscapes, it was but natural that the screen should attract him.

He first appeared on the screen as the hero in "Jeevan Prabhat" a Bombay Talkies' picture and his second appearance again as the hero of "Bahurani" is as eagerly awaited.

Bravo, Kishore! You have kept your promise given to friends a year back.

WADIA MOVIETONE

"Vijay Kumar" is coming to the screen at the Lamington Talkies in the second week of June. At the studios, "Diamond Queen" with Nadia in the lead is steadily progressing.

HINDUSTHAN CINETONE.

"Soubhagya", the story which according to Mr. Nanubhai Desai is a worthy successor to "Mud", is now ready and awaiting release at the Roxy Cinema, Bombay and will come to the screen after "Azad" has completed its run.

"Swaminath" a social story is on the sets under the direction of Mr. Wajahat Mirza.

PRABHAT FILM CO.

"Sant Dnyaneshwar" is drawing packed houses at the Central Cinema in Bombay, as was expected.

At the studios Mr. Shantaram has begun the rehearsals of "Padosi" and the picture will go on the sets in the first week of July.

Preparations are also afoot for the shooting of "Ramshastri" the story with justice as a theme.

NAVYUG CHITRAPAT

"Lapandav" the first social picture, the story of which has been written by the celebrated writer Mr. P. K. Atre, will be ready for the screen in the second week of June.

The distribution agency for Bombay, C P. & C. I., has been given to Messrs. Peerless Pictures of Bombay.

HUNS PICTURES

"Ardhangi" is still drawing crowded houses at the West End Cinema, Bombay. The picture is destined to go on at the same cinema till a few more issues of "filmindia" come out.

FAMOUS FILMS

"Dharma Patni" will now be released all over the South as the picture has been completed up to the expectations of the producers.

"Damaji" in Marathi, the story of which has been written by the well-known writer of Maharashtra, Mr. Bhal G. Pendharkar, will go into shooting almost immediately under the direction of Mr. Gunjal.

NEW THEATRES LTD.

"Andhi" will soon come to Bombay.

"Har Jeet" under the direction of Amar Mullick, is expected to be a very good picture with Kanan and Pahari in the cast.

"Doctor", a Bengali picture is fast nearing completion.

FILM CORPORATION OF INDIA

"Hindusthan Hamara" has become a beautiful picture in the hands of our young director Ram Daryani. With Padmadevi and Jamuna in the cast, the picture has great star value to pull at the box-offices.

"Shap Mukti" which is said to be the Bengali version of "Zamana" has gone into shooting under the direction of Mr. P. C. Barua. Once again Padmadevi and Jamuna lead an excellent cast of artistes.

TARUN PICTURES

They have started shooting their maiden picture "TRUST YOUR WIFE" (Nirali Duniya) with Lalita Pawar in the lead. The picture will be distributed by Messrs. Gujrat Film Circuit.

Leela Chitnis in "Bandhan" a Bombay Talkies' picture under production

Printed by Camer Saleh at the New Jack Printing Works, 75, Apollo Street, Fort, and published by him for "filmindia Publications Ltd." from 104, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

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